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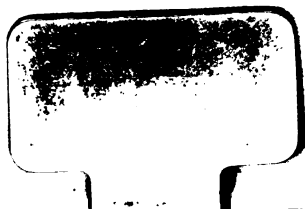
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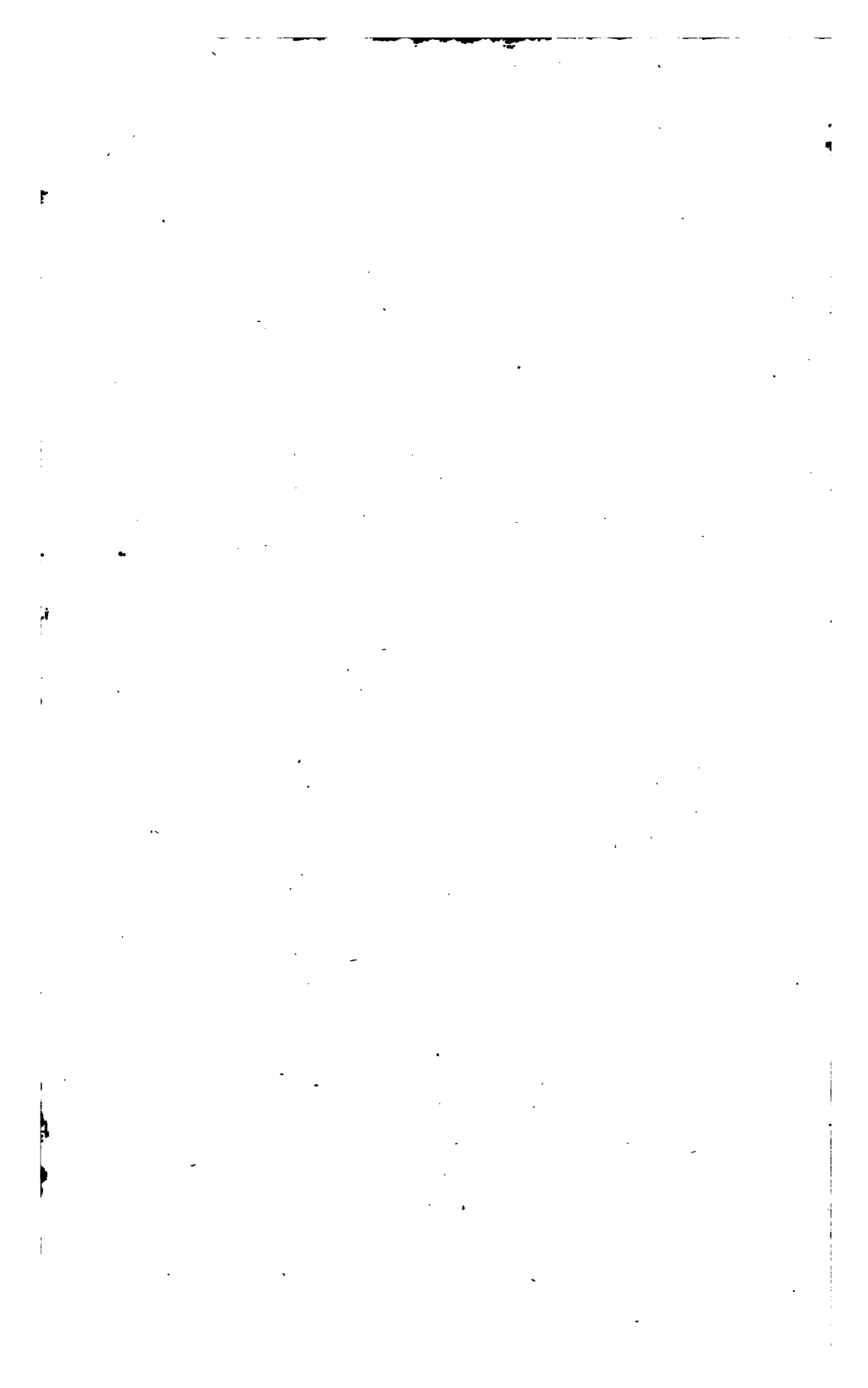
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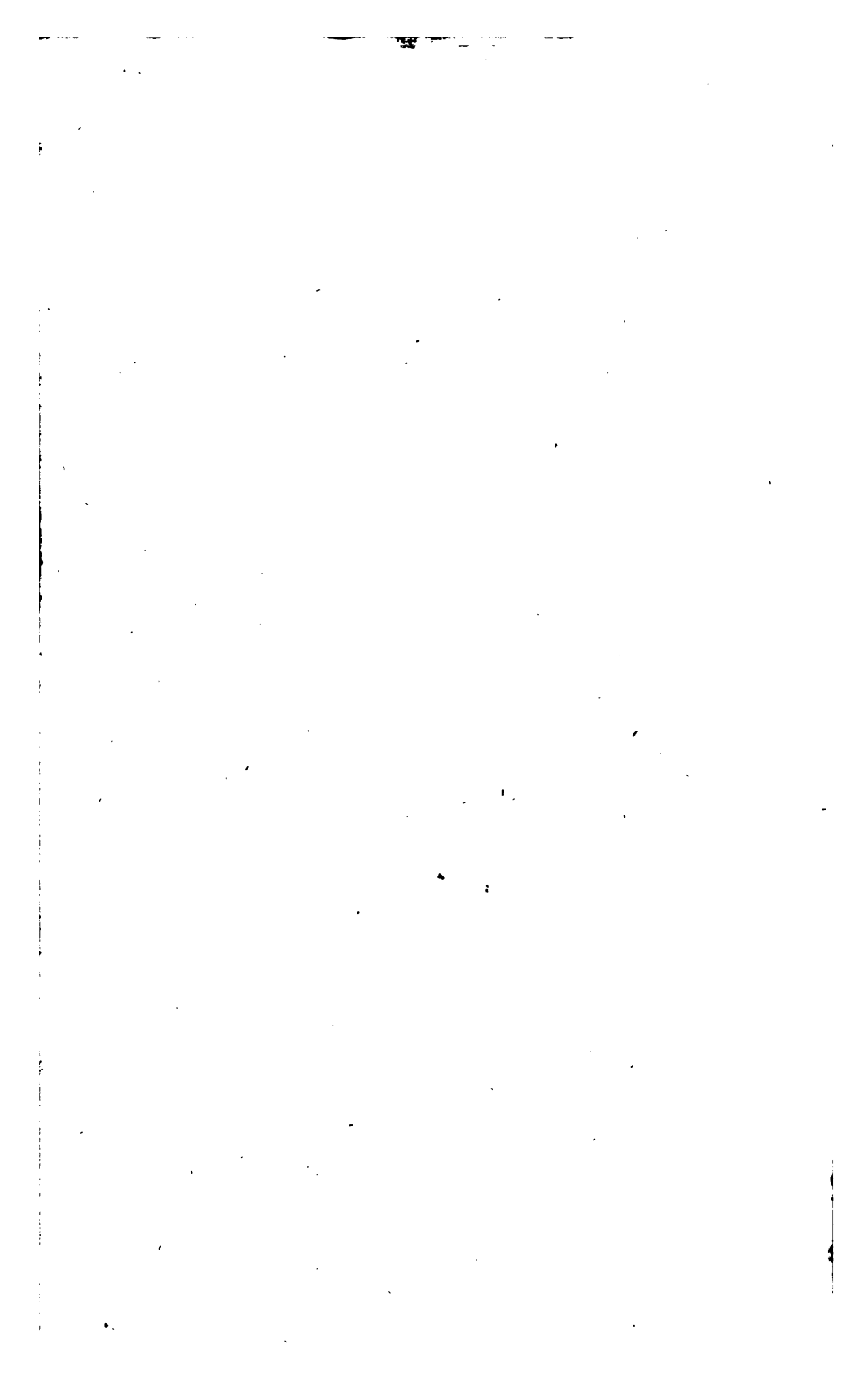
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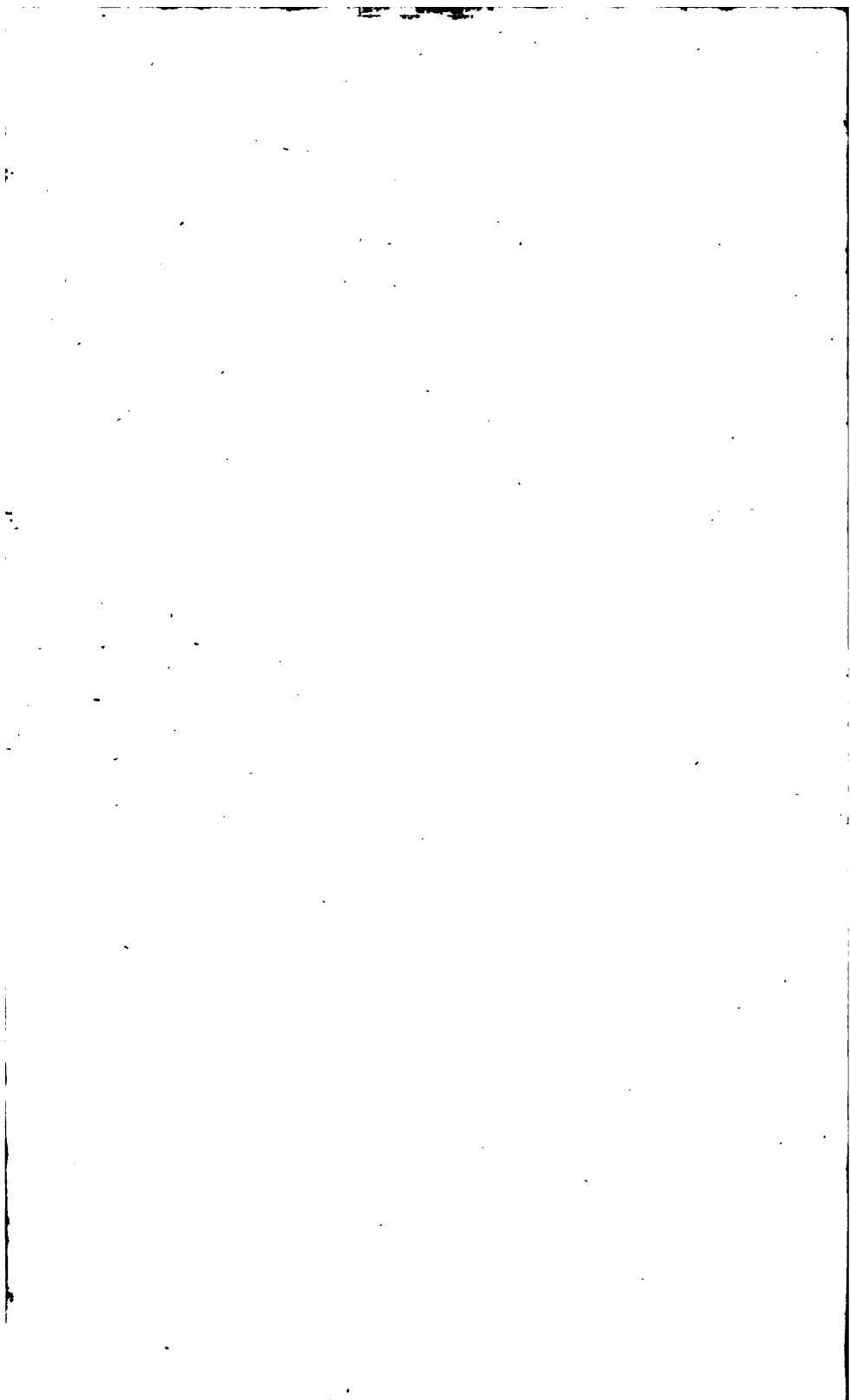
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NORTH VIEW OF THE REMAINS OF ELTHAM PALACE.



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S. 1020

AN  
HISTORICAL  
AND  
DESCRIPTIVE ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
ROYAL PALACE AT ELTHAM.



*Badge of Edward the Fourth, see p. 93.*

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BY JOHN CHESSELL BUCKLER.

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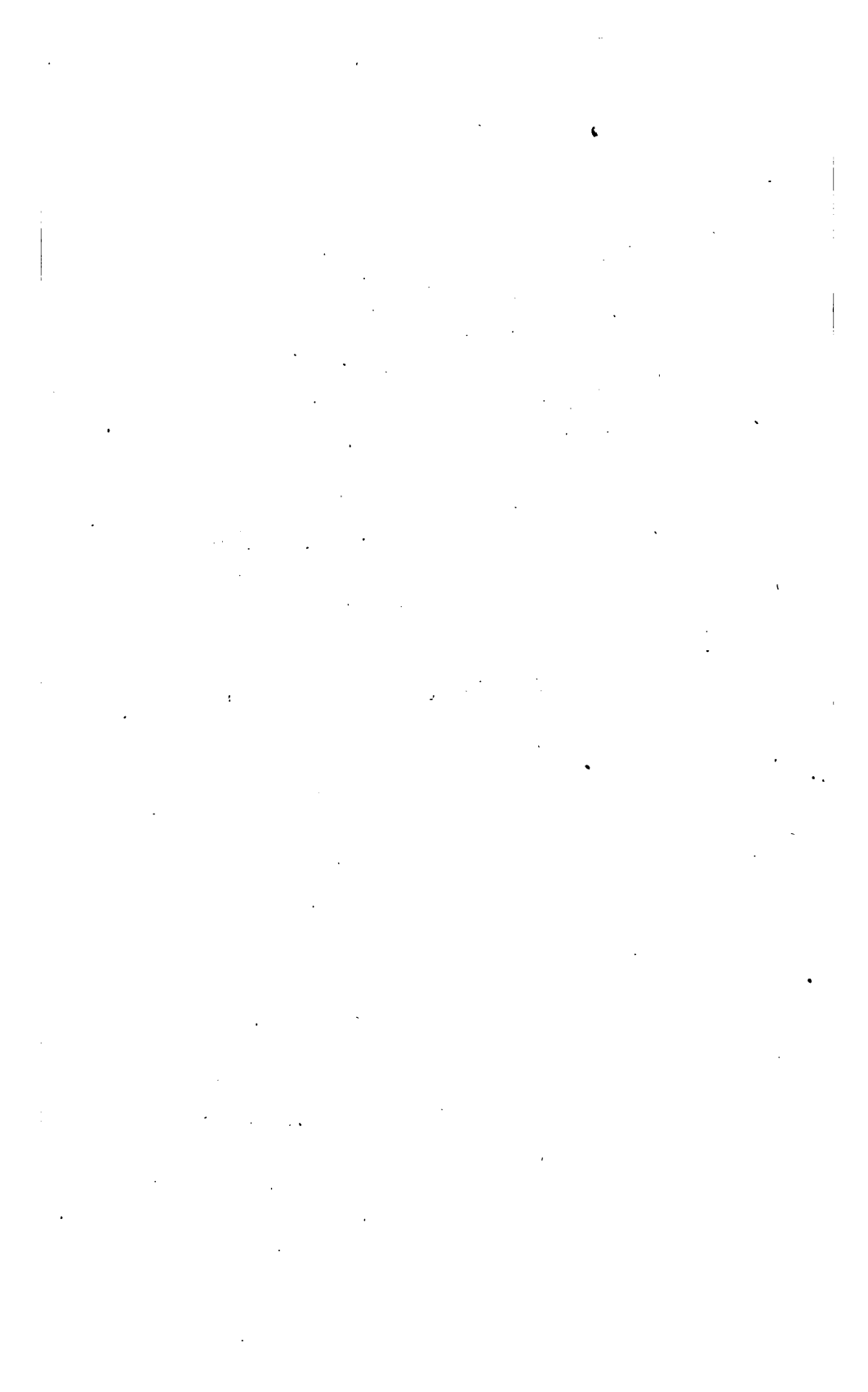
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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE following pages are devoted to an examination of the Architectural remains of Eltham Palace. The Memoranda which have supplied the bulk of these descriptions were chiefly collected in 1810. At that time the condition and accompaniments of the ruins were more interesting and various than they can ever again appear. The ground within the inclosure, remained as it was left after the removal or dilapidation of the ancient buildings. The moat, which till lately was rugged and uncultivated, and its banks picturesquely diversified with trees and shrubs, now appears with all the neatness and gaiety of a modern flower-garden, to suit the character of a Villa standing where, at the period before named, were the remnants of an ancient gateway joined to the walls of an humble cottage.

These and other alterations, have lessened the number and beauty of the prospects afforded by the scattered ruins of the Palace, and must surely be regretted by those who remember Eltham twenty years ago. But the depredations are not limited to the outward appendages: the hall itself has been injured in almost every

accessible part, and many of its ornaments entirely destroyed.

In what proportion the castellated and civil styles were combined in the Architecture of this Palace, cannot now be known, but that it was a fortified house there can be no doubt; and that Edward the Fourth obliterated much of this character, from this his favourite Palace, there is good authority to believe. He, however, retained the moat, and the gateway with the embattled curtain wall, which were deemed sufficient securities against sudden intrusion.

Their former boldness and strength are indicated by their ruins; and the expence which was bestowed on the edifices within, is testified by the magnificence of the now isolated hall.

The description of the remains of this noble Palace may be fairly preceded by some general observations on ancient Domestic architecture, which was conformable to a system wherein grandeur and convenience were happily combined, and without a knowledge of which, it would be impossible to trace in the present disjointed state of the walls and foundations of Eltham Palace, the original harmony of its plan and arrangement.

Since the revival of taste for ancient English architecture, the Ecclesiastical examples have been the favourite subjects of study and investi-

gation. It is unnecessary to inquire into the cause of the neglect with which the Domestic buildings of the same antiquity have been treated; I shall rather endeavour to prove that it is unmerited, and to show that there yet remains a sufficient variety of specimens to cast a useful, if not a very distinct, gleam of light on the grandeur and progressive improvement of the architecture; as well as to enable us to judge in some measure of the degree of comfort afforded by ancient habitations, and in what points we have improved on the domestic accommodation of our ancestors.

It does not appear that the ancients had one style for their Churches, and another for their houses. The characteristic distinction was produced by the exercise of sound judgment rather than any peculiar skill, and resulted from the excellent adaptation of the constituent parts to the various purposes for which they were required, all the gradations of dignity being as duly marked in the external appearance, as convenience was consulted in internal arrangement.

This precept of due subordination between a church and a mansion, and between the principal and inferior members of an edifice of the latter kind, was laid down by the early architects, and followed by their successors during a long period; nor can these different degrees

of elegance in the design of the same structure, be too strongly held up to view in this age of expensive building. It is a difference which our contemporary architects in their love of ornament entirely overlook, or utterly disregard; though surely a rule established on just principles, and sanctioned by antiquity, should not be neglected when it is our professed wish and endeavour to revive the spirit, with the style, of ancient English architecture.

Thoroughly imbued as we are with zeal for imitation, however we may fail in practice, and with a regard for the pure antique, however we may witness the destruction of its choicest models, it is still doubtful whether we shall ever submit to a sacrifice of those luxuries which a refinement of education and manners, and a more general diffusion of knowledge, has extended, and retreat to the age of simplicity, or rudely displayed magnificence.

This retrograde step is neither probable, nor perhaps desirable; but yet it must be evident that, unless such a course as this be followed, we cannot expect to witness a revival of the ancient style of domestic architecture, unalloyed by those changes and innovations which are requisite to accomplish any kind of union between the taste of these, and that of former times.

It is almost superfluous to observe that we



possess but few ancient buildings, whether domestic or ecclesiastical, which retain altogether unaltered their primitive character. Churches, castles, and manor-houses, were either wholly or in part taken down, for the purpose of being renewed on a superior scale of extent and beauty. These in their turn submitted to further alterations or enlargements, and so on till the fabric of shreds became more curious than elegant, or till the ancient styles lost their charms, and, under the prevailing influence of a new fashion, the process of total demolition and re-edification was again repeated.

Erections intended for defence became the abodes of fashion ; gloomy rooms were changed into gay apartments ; the appearance of resistance was followed by the show of equipage and idle security. Draw-bridges were swept away, moats changed into hanging gardens, or lengthened rows of terraces ; the narrow deep receding archway and its portcullis were screened beneath a stately porch, or wholly removed ; suspicious security retired, and the gloomy grandeur of a baronial castle, or an embattled manor-house, was softened into the elegance of a peaceful mansion, with unbarred casements, a spacious lawn, and all the pleasing evidences of refinement and comfort.

All that can be done to transform ancient

castles into convenient modern houses, without excessive violation of their original character, has been effected at Berkeley and Powys ; yet no man who, to suit the whim of a patron, should plan a castle in these days, would copy those buildings as models. Their original indications of strength and purposed resistance, though not entirely concealed, have been artfully abated. The disproportion of their extent to their external stateliness, may clash with our notions of internal accommodation, and betray the truth that security rather than convenience, where both could not be united, was the object pursued by their original builders.

But the reverse of purpose in the subsequent alterations is still more palpable ; and, though no one would for a moment confound these noble structures with the multitude of houses which are designated as priories, abbeys, or castles, without possessing a single feature to justify the application of such names, they would be as little likely to be selected by any architect of taste or judgment, as authentic models of an ancient castle in the proper acceptance of the term.

In the plan and construction of Cotehele house, we have a remarkable instance of the suspicion and love of security manifested by its owners, to the exclusion of outward beauty, and in some respects, to the contraction of ac-

commodation and convenience. This house had no defence beyond what the substance of its walls afforded, and this was probably sufficient. In no particular does the situation of Cotehele present any advantage to recommend the choice; the ground rises with a gentle ascent from the Tamer, about a quarter of a mile from whose bank, on the west side, and fifteen miles from Plymouth, it is situated.

The gloomy character of the south front, which contains the principal gateway, does not, however, belong to the opposite front, where alone we observe that provision for comfort, namely, spacious and lofty windows, without which, a house, however venerable for its antiquity, or curious for its architecture, is no fit habitation for social man. But on this side is a feature which we no more expect to meet in the domestic buildings of the west of England,\* than we should anticipate its absence in the border houses of the north; I mean a tower, high

\* Perhaps it may be admitted that towers which characterised the buildings of remote antiquity, and which possessed the means of resistance, often formed the bold and appropriate ornaments of mansions built in the 15th and 16th centuries. East Barsham, Melbury in Dorsetshire, Hengrave (since altered), and Compton Winyate, favour this opinion. The very ancient mansion at Stanton St. Quintin in Wiltshire, and the Deanery in Salisbury, were originally fortified, and presented towers of considerable strength.

above every other building of the group, strong and bulky in proportion, and placed at one extreme angle, as a commanding post, and the last refuge of the inmates.

Such is the general external character of Cotehele house ; but neither the massive simplicity of the south, nor the castellated appearance of the north side, were capable of more serious resistance than might be required by a sudden attack from marauders, to whom time and means were wanting for a regular assault. An additional interest is felt on the examination of this mansion, since its venerable aspect has not in any considerable instance, been impaired by modern vagaries. The chapel is distinguished by a handsome turret ; and the hall on the west side of the quadrangle, has a lofty roof arched in wood, and is enriched with ancient and curiously carved furniture, while the walls are covered with armour and warlike weapons. The tower over the south gateway, is embattled and flanked by buildings, and the entrance is by a doorway within a large recessed arch, only just wide enough for passengers on foot. The greater part of the architecture is probably not older than the fifteenth century, and, its style throughout, is rudely bold.\*

\* This interesting mansion is now the property of the Earl of Mount Edgumbe, who preserves it with the care it so well deserves.

The plan of our ancient manor houses varied from the quadrangle to the oblong, and the Roman H. Of the latter are Tickenham, Kingston Seymour, and Rushton; of the former Eltham Palace, Haddon Hall, Wingfield Manor-house, St. Donats, Hengrave, and Compton Winyate; and of the intermediate character, Thorpland Hall and Evercreach Hall. Other plans were sometimes adopted, but the relative position of the rooms was nearly alike in all.

Quadrangular houses were built on two plans; that is, their principal courts (for they had frequently more than one quadrangle) were cloistered, or otherwise. Nor was it in this respect only that such houses resembled monasteries. The refectory, or great hall, was as prominent a part of one as of the other; and to this were attached offices, whose situation elsewhere would have proved both injudicious and inconvenient. At the same time, both were houses or habitations, and the plan which experience approved as the most commodious, could not be safely departed from, excepting in particulars where the variation was essentially required by the different purposes to which they were destined.

But without pursuing a comparison which might be extended to several external appendages, I observe that in quadrangular piles of more than one court, the hall sometimes stood

in the outer court, as at Mayfield, and sometimes in the inner, as at Hengrave, and Comp-ton Winyate; but in both instances was placed on the side immediately facing the entrance gateway. This was generally its position in houses built on the plan of the H; but one of the wings, as at Rushton, was occasionally chosen. In less stately mansions of the same kind, as at Eastbury, and also in houses of the size and description of Evercreach, the hall appears immediately in front. It is the common porch of the mansion, and though enclosed by a court-yard—an appendage rarely omitted in houses of the most inconsiderable quality—the noble gateway or outward porch, which by its superior magnificence in the larger buildings, is well calculated to impress the stranger with the grandeur of the pile he as yet sees but imperfectly, is here of course an excluded feature.

The larger manor houses were frequently encompassed by broad moats, and approached by bridges, occasionally having a handsome gateway. The spacious court in front of the house was designed for recreation, which, in ancient times, was sought in horsemanship and violent exercises; and afterwards, in the more refined and gentle pleasures of flower-gardens, shady walks, and recluse arbours, whose variety was improved by pavilions, statues, and fountains.

The hall was the centre or heart of the house;

it parted the offices and state rooms, the staircase and entrances to which it generally commanded. At its porch, his friends and equals were welcomed by the master to partake of his prepared hospitality. Within its ample space were conducted the banquets of his assembled retainers; sometimes cheered by the presidency of the host himself at the high table, and on other and common occasions by his presence in the gallery; while coats of armour and chain mail, targets, arrows, shields, spears, and other instruments of war and sport, with their common accompaniments, the branching antlers of the deer, formed the appropriate garniture of the walls.

Raby Castle is an exception to the common rule of placing the hall on the ground-floor. In this instance, and the exception refers to one of the most stately castellated mansions in England, the chief apartment is elevated on a basement story, which, in fact, answers the purposes of a hall, and with its pillars and staircase, the supporters and conductor to the room above, assumes a striking novelty of character.

Another instance of the same kind, is to be seen in the Prior's house at Wenlock. The beautiful hall of this mansion is on the upper floor, immediately over the kitchen and other office-rooms, which, throughout the building, are either below, or intermixed on the same

floor with all the principal apartments ; an arrangement by no means to be selected for imitation, though in the residence of an individual of fixed and regular habits, of few wants, and liable to no caprice of fashion, it supplied every necessary accommodation.

At Raby, the hall contributes nothing to the external grandeur of the buildings, comparable with what we observe at Hampton Court, Penshurst, and Eltham. It occupies the entire side of a quadrangle, but is undistinguished either by a porch, a lofty roof, or a loover. At Wenlock, the hall makes still less of an external appearance. Here it is evident that a certain quantity of accommodation was required within a given space ; this, not grandeur of appearance, was the object aimed at ; consequently an oblong building of moderate extent, comprehended all the conveniences which, in other houses, were spread over the four sides of a court.

A few paces from the hall led to the withdrawing-room. Still higher up was a suit of noble apartments, sometimes including the great gallery, which, however, was not unfrequently on the uppermost floor. This apartment does not properly belong to houses of remote antiquity, but was introduced, or at least attained importance, with the Elizabethan style of domestic



architecture. It usually embraced the utmost length of the house; was the common dining-room of the family; and, indeed, occasionally served the purposes of all the other state rooms, uniting with the elegance of the withdrawing-room, the noble accommodation of the refectory, the space requisite for an ambulatory, occasionally the stores of a library,\* and conveniences for music, and every species of festive entertainment. When once introduced, there were very few houses pretending to magnificence, which did not admit this addition to the ancient hall, whose services it in a great measure supplied, without abridging its external importance.

The long passages in many ancient mansions are, in fact, galleries, like those around the courts of our ancient hostels, which in private houses the obvious inconveniences of their original exposure speedily caused to be inclosed, but which, where the occupancy was transient, and some sacrifice of comfort a matter of course, were little thought of as evils, and suffered to remain among the numberless distinctions between home and an inn. Nor is there any reason to doubt that this was the origin of the gallery chamber, which formed so conspicuous a feature among the apartments of Elizabethan

\* The noble gallery at Blickling, the seat of Lady Suffield, is enriched with a library.

houses, and, from a mere passage of communication, became at last, as we have seen, the most considerable apartment for its extent, its sumptuousness, and its destination.

The ancients were as indifferent about a handsome staircase, as the moderns are studious to render it the chief feature of their houses. Double rows of rooms seldom if ever formed part of their plans, and as it was the introduction of a contrary fashion, which gave the staircase its breadth and importance, that appendage, so graceful when well contrived, scarce ever either needed or attained any amplitude of dimension. After this admission, I shall hardly be allowed to claim any merit for the architects who, in this respect at least, gave no unnecessary space, or superfluous ornament, to mere passages; who considered the staircase as subordinate to the apartments with which it communicated; as a place not of rest but transit; and who, if they made no improvement in this important feature of domestic architecture, at least escaped the imputation which too commonly attached to the taste of a later age, that of sacrificing for its sake the best portion of the house, and making, as it were, a spacious porch the entrance to rooms of inferior dimensions.

There remain but few staircases of very high antiquity, which are not cylindrical. A Nor-

man external staircase of great beauty and singularity, appears among the ruins adjacent to Canterbury cathedral. The priory-house at Wenlock, has a gallery faced by an open wrought stone screen, attached to its inferior front, as the means of communication between the rooms. But this contrivance would not enable the prior to reach his bed-room, which is within the gable of the roof, immediately over the withdrawing-room, at the south end of the house. He ascended by very strong but rudely formed steps, and guarded against sudden intrusion in his retreat, by having the first step from the floor so high that it could not be trodden upon without considerable difficulty. For his own accommodation, a moveable step must have been provided, which, when he arrived at the summit, he might draw after him, or entrust to the keeping of an attendant below.

A similar contrivance is observable at the foot of the stone staircase leading from the noble banqueting-room in the tower gateway of Magdalen College in Oxford to the sleeping apartments over. The first step is three feet from the floor, and it is as evident in this, as in the foregoing example, that a temporary block was necessary to make the staircase accessible.

The means of communication between the upper and lower floor of the fisherman's hut at

Mere, near Glastonbury, is by a flight of steps on the outside, towards the south. This curious, and very ancient little building, stands alone on spongy ground, which has been floated for fish-ponds, and has undergone none of those alterations which have lessened, and otherwise so much injured, the elegant mansion to which it belonged. It has three rooms below, and a large and a small one above, with a roof arched in timber.

The priest's house, joined to the west end of Flaundon Church, in Hertfordshire, has an equally rude and inconvenient means of ascent to the upper floor; and the ancient Chequers Inn at Canterbury, had galleries once extending round its court with compartments, and handsome tracery, very few specimens of which have been spared in the conversion of this celebrated pile from the temporary habitation of pilgrims and travellers, to the fixed residence of paupers and low mechanics.\*

Another important feature in domestic architecture remains to be noticed: I mean that

\* The Cross Inn in Oxford retains its ancient character; and in London, several of the principal inns have not yet been deprived of their peculiar features, which form little of external beauty: the spacious gateway opens on an entire quadrangle with tiers of chambers, screened by galleries of timber and plaster.

very ancient and comfortable appendage, the fire-place. If we were to judge from those stately halls which have been warmed by other means, and which seem to have wanted only this addition to render them as convenient as luxury could have demanded, we might be induced to conclude that the invention had for a time been lost. Neglected it certainly was; but to this neglect we owe the introduction of the loover, a turret with open work, calculated to convey away the smoke from a charcoal fire on a hearth in the middle of the room; and which proved a feature of no ordinary beauty to the external fabric.

The common rule of placing fire-places between the windows, was systematically departed from in the reign of Elizabeth, and the change has been followed ever since as an arrangement, calculated to promote the comfort and elegance of the apartments. Their shafts, however, ceased to be so ornamental to the exterior as was the former contrivance; and I cannot avoid observing, that that great master, Sir John Vanbrugh, who, beyond any other architect of the Italian school, followed the ancients in composing their buildings with a view to effect, contrived generally to place the chimneys of his houses on the external walls.

The ancients had two ways of arranging their

chimneys on the exterior; one, by attaching them like towers to the walls, as at Blithfield, Hengrave, and Costessey; the other by resting them on the parapet, as at Thornbury. It is difficult to say which was the most ancient; the first, though not most frequently practised, was the most ornamental; at Blithfield, indeed, the building is indebted to these appendages for the pleasing variety of its outline.

The chimneys of some mansions exhibit a greater quantity and diversity of ornament than any other members of the design. This is the case at Thorpland Hall, in Norfolk, and at Cheynes in Buckinghamshire; but perhaps no other ancient edifice furnishes so elegant a variety of clustered chimneys as Thornbury Castle; their ornaments are more numerous and delicate than those of any other part of the exterior; and these instances are sufficient to prove how much more labour, expence, and ingenuity were bestowed on the design and construction of these useful features of domestic architecture in the sixteenth century, than at any preceding or subsequent period.

I may remark in general on the alterations which took place in domestic architecture during the sixteenth century, that the rooms were less numerous and more spacious than formerly; perhaps also that they were sometimes

more conveniently, as well as more regularly disposed; but here we must pause: for if they can claim superiority in point of accommodation, they fall infinitely short of the magnificence of those which preceded. A scrupulous formality distinguishes the one; the other was planned with that picturesque irregularity which without any unnecessary sacrifice of internal comfort (though we should admit that it was not sedulously courted as afterwards), is so favourable to external beauty.

The union of the Elizabethan, with the more ancient style of domestic architecture, and their respective characters, and claims to our approval, may be remarked with considerable exactness, in the quadrangle of the ancient seat of the Longs, at Great Wraxhall, in Wiltshire. The square shaped and stiff mullioned windows, were sometimes improved into a bow, as at Bramshill; Burleigh, and Montacute, after the incomparable model at Hengrave; but they admitted of no other pleasing variety. If beauty may in this instance be estimated by number, as it is often, though falsely, by dimension, the crowds of windows in the Elizabethan houses, must gain as much applause as the crowds of ornaments which chiefly distinguish the French ecclesiastical architecture. Hardwick Hall is little else than a fabric of glass; Longleat has

a profusion of windows; and Rushmore Hall, one of the finest mansions of that age, in England, though the hall itself is full half a century older, is similarly illuminated.

The ancient Border Houses in the north of England, are structures of peculiar interest; they sometimes consisted of single towers, and with all the means of defence, often possessed the conveniences of moderate mansions. Naworth Castle remains perhaps the largest and most perfect of all these houses. It has a tower at its Western, and another at its Eastern extremity, the former being the most massy and commanding, and agreeing with the form generally adopted in these mansions; that is, the parapet overhangs the walls, and has four turrets at the angles, strongly embattled.

A tower is an indispensable feature of a Border house; but Naworth was so considerable as to have two. There is a second tower to Yanwath Hall, machicolated, but it is of very inconsiderable dimensions. Askham Hall, near Lowther, has only one tower, which is loftier than that at Yanwath; but both accord with the above general description.\*

\* The buildings of Askham Hall have been very much dilapidated, excepting the tower and the court yard gateway, the weather cornice of whose arch is wreathed like a rope, and the extremities coiled up in knots as corbels. Over



we have observed that the border castles are generally flanked by a tower at one angle; and it may be here remarked, that in houses of a moderate class, and sometimes indeed in the mansions of nobility, the same plan was formerly observed; I mean that the front was seldom composed of a centre between two wings, but that to a long front was attached, at one extremity, a huge and lofty gabled pile consisting of several stories, the basement being amply sheltered by the bold projections of the superincumbent rooms. Hadlow Place in Kent, and several ancient houses both at Halstead, and Barle Colin, are examples of this kind; one in particular a short distance north-east from Halstead church, sheltered by a grove, may be noticed. The porch was often attached to this bulky appendage. This was not a casual arrangement, but a fixed character or plan.

The gateway are the following arms and inscription: quarterly, 1. per chevron Sable and Ermine, in chief two boars' heads couped Or, for Sandford; 2. Or, on a chevron between three mullets Azure, pierced of the field, as many fleurs de lys of the same, for Crackenthorp; 3. Azure, two bars, on a dexter canton Gules a lion passant guardant Or, for Lancaster; 4. Sable, three hounds rampant Argent. Crest, on a casque a wolf's head, couped erect.

THOMAS SANDFORD ESQVVR  
FOR THYS PAYD MEAT AND HYR  
THE YEAR OF OURE SAVYOVRE  
XV HVNDRTHE SEVENTY FOVR.

In buildings intended for defence, and which perhaps are the most ancient examples, it was the most suitable in every respect; but could only have been adopted, in mansions not likely to be exposed to the fury of hostile multitudes, in conformity with a long adopted fashion.

The same principle is observable in churches whose towers stand at the west end, an arrangement which still continues to be practised in exact imitation of antiquity; but in domestic architecture, the feature before mentioned, has been long out of use, and whether we now build a mansion or a cottage, exact uniformity is sure to be observed in its design.

Domestic Architecture in the northern and midland parts of England, and particularly in Lancashire, Cheshire, and Staffordshire, is remarkable for a style, I will not say altogether peculiar, but practised no where else so commonly, or on so grand a scale. It has a sort of rude magnificence, in which, if elegance and taste are not so evident as in the more stately fabrics of stone and brick raised in other parts of the country at the same periods, the general strength and ingenuity of construction, and frequently the beauty of decoration in its specimens, demand an investigation of their antiquity, and most prominent characteristics.

In the thirteenth century carpentry had at-

tained great excellence, and in the following, its beauty vied with that of the finest productions of the sculptor. I am not aware that there now exists a specimen of timberwork in Domestic architecture, older than the beginning of the fourteenth century. Bagilly, and Smethells, are of this age; and some parts of Samlesbury Hall may be referred to the middle or close of the fourteenth century.

There is not a single county in England which does not furnish more or less numerous examples of ancient timber houses. Neither was this fashion confined to any particular period. Every age from that in which it was first introduced, or beyond which I have not hitherto succeeded in tracing an example, produces its specimens, with many peculiarities from local or other circumstances, which cannot but add zest to our inquiries on the subject.

Among these peculiarities, the manner of applying the material which was common to all; its excess, and its extravagant solidity, appear to me, to constitute the great difference between the Lancashire, and Cheshire mansions, and those of other counties; in accordance with which distinction, it will not fail to be remarked, that the former exposed the timbers more commonly on the outside, than the latter. Of this the great hall at Samlesbury is a striking instance. Not

only are its walls composed of massy timbers, whose small interstices are filled with brick and plaster, but its handsome bay window is constructed in a similar manner. Of course, however, a general massiveness of character will not exclude the minor distinctions in dimensions, comparative elegance, and architectural construction, which are usually discoverable in buildings of the same genus. For instance, the screens at Rufford, and Little Milton, are both of wood, and probably of the same age, some of their ornaments having an exact correspondence; but while the former is wrought into handsome proportions and ornaments, the latter is in squares, composed of rude pieces without carving.

Bolton Hall is another of these durable fabrics, whose only ornaments are its beams and panels. But one of the most curious I know is that of Bagilly in Cheshire, whose ponderous timber frame, than which stone itself could no longer be expected to resist time, or more firmly to withstand the stroke of injury with its massy pillars and arches, and panels wrought into the mere semblance of tracery, as though it had remained a memorial of the first age of the art, cannot surely be surpassed.\*

\* When the ribs or arches were not of great span, and presented nothing but the rude material, it seems to have

Why domestic architecture should for a time have assumed this character in the northern counties, is a question more easily proposed than answered. In the mansions of the great and opulent about the fifteenth century, we should look for the utmost comfort known to the age; we should expect beauty and elegance combined with extent; lightness with solidity, and strength; and grandeur, without the taint of coarseness. But the contrary of all these will be found to characterise (not however without exceptions) the once stately houses of Lancashire, and Cheshire. The noblest among them remains with which I am acquainted, are Sunning Hill and Sunning Church. It has been the general practice to hew the bowl of a chosen tree, already naturally curved, into the precise figure demanded for its purpose, and when it was thus prepared, the massy beam was sawn asunder and erected: this was an easy method, and such an one as would naturally be practised when it was not deemed necessary to lavish time and expense in carving and ornamenting these particular buildings. An exact correspondence in the sides of a pointed arch, whether its form were true or not, was thus obtained; and the proof that this system was practised with studied regularity, appears in all the examples already remarked for their simplicity, where the grain of the wood may be observed to have widened into broad fissures by the operation of the weather, and to correspond on both sides. The South porch of the recently destroyed church at Sunning Hill, and the doorways of a very ancient house at Lawrence Waltham, in the same county, were formed in this manner.

bury, and Rufford, the latter confined to one or two curious rooms besides the hall, which is truly grand in its dimensions and ornaments, but the former of great extent, and singularity of design. Its exterior is altogether without grace; long and lofty, with a heavy roof springing from a coved cornice, but destitute of battlements, turrets, towers, or any object to break the line of view, except three ponderous stacks of brick chimneys on one side. What, however, it wants in general character, is largely compensated in the detail (if we may call it detail) of its constituent members.

The lighter ornaments of architecture, such as tracery and pinnacles, are here as rare as though they had been considered unworthy that genius which could conceive the boldness of the hall, the gigantic stature and strength of whose arches and beams are truly astonishing. Had the antiquity of this structure as far surpassed the time of Henry the Third, as it falls short of it, we should have ascribed its simplicity to the primeval age of science; but standing as it does with indisputable authority, between the period which claims the graceful architecture of the Palace at Westminster, and the light and beautiful timber house of Ockwell, built in the reign of Henry the Sixth, it is an anomaly for which we are not prepared to account.

In every proportion, this hall is not inferior to most similar rooms of ancient houses: but arches, pillars, and beams, wrought with no finer an instrument than the axe, are not calculated to produce elegance by their combination; nor will all the skill and contrivance of the builder make amends for the absence of ingenuity and taste.

Walls of plaster, with gables, overhanging roofs, supported on coves or arches, bow windows, and porches of timber, present another mixture, proving that the use of timber, as the chief material in domestic buildings, was but slowly discarded. Hadlow Place, and Marl Place in Kent, the former of about the age of Henry VIII., the latter perhaps of subsequent date, are of this description.

The Rectory house at Beaconsfield, which can scarcely claim to be coeval with the Reformation, may be cited not only as a curious building of its kind, but as according partly with the ancient style of constructing timber dwellings, and partly with the subsequent fashion. Its basement story is built entirely of brick, glazed in chequered patterns; and its upper story, with lofty gables and roofs, is formed of strong timbers closely placed, and plastered between. The house encloses three sides of a quadrangle, the fourth having a high wall and the gateway.

The principal staircase is attached to the north side; it is semi-cylindrical, and composed of timber, and though perfectly plain, is a curious feature of the building.

This house furnishes another illustration of the fact, that our early ancestors were no economists in the use of their building materials. Here are horse loads of solid timber in dark passages, of great length and little use, the removal of which would afford space for the extension and improvement of the apartments. It was not enough to make use of pillars and beams in proportion to the superincumbent weight, their number and bulk often exceed by a great deal, what could possibly have been required; and that too though the floors were formed of enormous planks, and the steps to them of massy blocks on which the axe almost labours in vain.

Architecture, generally speaking, during the reign of Henry the Eighth, betrayed evidently the last scintillations of once splendid talent, exhausted prematurely by its own irregularities and profusion. But this was more the case with ecclesiastical than domestic architecture, and while the former languished, and that from causes altogether independent of the violent changes of the day, the latter distinguished itself by the production of many noble mansion



houses which would have done honour to the present age, and which for the union of comfort with magnificence, are unrivalled.

It has been stated as a general fact, that the ancients made no material distinction between the architecture of their buildings devoted to sacred purposes, and that of those appropriated to domestic uses. This rule, however, is not without exceptions; accordingly we find the arch enclosing tracery, limited to the chapel and hall windows, in Magdalen, All Souls, and New Colleges, and to the chapel windows at Compton Winyate, Samlesbury, Maxstoke, and other ancient edifices.

Since in the above examples, in Oxford, the halls partake of the character which some suppose should exclusively belong to the chapel, it is probable that the variety when made, was adopted for the sake of economy, or in compliance with the prevailing fashion, which, wherever it could, discarded the arch for a square frame, or in short, for some cause quite inde-

Letts Priory presents a fine specimen of the style of domestic architecture, which was common in the reign of Henry VIII, a style recommended by its novelty, and still more by its economy, in which respect it claimed an advantage over the more correct species of *gothic*, in which the Duke of Buckingham built Thornbury, Sir Thomas Kytson Hengrave, and the founders of Cowdray and Compton Winyate, their respective mansions.

pendent of a rule which required the obvious distinction referred to.

These remarks on the domestic architecture of the fifteenth century, are supported by many more examples than have been named; and a correct observation of the preceding styles, will lead to the conclusion that they were practised under no regulation of the kind I have mentioned, or had any narrow limit to their beauty and splendour.

To the absence of a rule which would have obliged the architect to abate the graceful arch, and reject the bold tracery, which are among the principal characteristics of Henry the Third's architecture, we owe that incomparably magnificent specimen of a Palatial edifice at Westminster. In its adornment the beauties of painting were added to the elegance of architecture; their united powers must, when the building was entire, have produced a dazzling splendour which words are unable to describe, for I may declare without exaggeration, that even now the merits of the combination are wonderful.\*

\* Figures large as life, allegorical and historical, adorn the sides of the Painted Chamber, and the great room adjoining; while the intervening spaces were entirely covered with pictures from the histories of the Kings of England, and of the Old Testament, interspersed with descriptive sen-

The most admired ornaments of architecture were liberally bestowed on the Abbey barns. Those at Abbotsbury, Sherborne, Pilton, and Glastonbury, are remarkable for beauty of proportion, and variety of decoration: their plan is cruciform. The barn at Ely, the extreme length of which is two hundred and thirty feet, has double porches, answering to the transepts of churches, and lancet windows in the East end. It was built in the reign of Henry the Third, and exhibits a very ingenious and handsome specimen of carpentry.

The parapet of the more magnificent barn at Abbotsbury, is embellished with turrets resting on the buttresses and on the floor of an external gallery or passage, which once extended quite round the building. But the barns belonging to Glastonbury Abbey, were decorated on a scale worthy of the almost unequalled opulence and splendour of that religious establishment. Their gables present, besides elegant windows, and the emblems of the four Evangelists, the tenaces, or sacred texts; and though in the chapel, the ornaments of whose architecture were minute and innumerable, less scope was found for the painter's art, at least in the disposition of figures, it exhibited specimens of ornamental patterns not inferior in merit and taste. No untinctured stone or wood work appeared in any part of the interior, the entire surface being covered with party-coloured painting, and burnished silver and gold.

whole length statues of Abbots and other ecclesiastics, on their summits.

These observations on our ancient domestic architecture, may be sufficient to prove with what indefatigable exertion our ancestors cultivated this noble science, when they were called to exertion either by their own personal comfort, or by the influence of their piety and devotion.



*Pendant Corbel formerly at Ellham. See p. 78.*

# ELTHAM PALACE.

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The present remains of Eltham Palace warrant this supposition ; but at no period for the purpose of magnificence were its ancient limits ever transgressed. As the nature of the original plan, and in some measure the ground, precluded any alteration of this kind in the precinct, the enlargements which were probably made in the house on its re-edification in the fifteenth century, were effected by encroaching on the courts.

Eltham was among the number of quadrangular houses. Its principal courts were very spacious, and the moat unusually broad. This liberality of dimension befitted a Palace, and was requisite in a certain degree to its accordance with the open expanse of the surrounding scenery. Art had supplied the deficiencies of nature with respect to its situation as a place of defence. The bank of the moat was a work of great labour and expence, and when completed, proved a bulwark of considerable importance. It was, however, less formidable before the gateway, than towards the west ; and on the south side it formed a terrace full one hundred feet broad. The space thus enclosed, contained the Palace, embattled it is true, but, perhaps, destitute of every other ornamental feature which originated in military architecture.

In its design no doubt comfort and accommo-

dation were mainly considered, and it is to be regretted that no evidence on these points remains. The subject abounds with interest closely allied to our personal feelings and considerations. When we view the habitations of our ancestors, we are supplied with the surest basis to our inquiries as to their general manner of life, and however they may have failed in delicacy, of this at least we are certain, that their Palaces have not been surpassed for splendour in these days of refinement.

The felicity with which the ancients generally made choice of a situation, and afterwards adapted their building to the nature of the scenery, is well known. Their elegant and refined architecture received an additional beauty from its association with landscape of a corresponding character.

Good taste does not sanction a violent contrast between the architecture and its scenery. This fault has not many examples among antiquity, and referring these remarks to Eltham, it may be observed that there was a sufficient gradation between the polish of the architecture, and the unrestrained grandeur of the surrounding woods and lawns, and that harmony and beauty resulted from the combination.

The space enclosed bears a nearer resemblance to a square, than to any other figure, and

contains upwards of one acre, but its sides and angles are very irregular. The external wall (within the moat) was built with great care and strength, and its basement is likely to remain long after all other traces of the Palace have disappeared. Here was the strength of a castle with its appearance, a union not always deemed necessary in the application of the castellated character to domestic architecture. In this Palace we see the work of different ages: relics of remote antiquity, and of buildings, in the construction of which, firmness was an indispensable quality; and others less ancient, with strength apportioned to times of tranquillity.

The natural situation of Eltham Palace added very little to its strength as a fortification, though it occupied an eminence of more considerable elevation than any other ground in the neighbourhood, excepting Shooter's Hill. The steepest slope faces the west, on which side, the Palace commanded a broad and beautiful landscape, and where there is reason to suppose that most of the principal apartments were situated. From its walls there was a gradual declivity extending more than a mile; and at twice that distance, appeared the bold and finely wooded outline of Greenwich park. Still further on were seen the spire of old Saint Paul's, and the lofty roof of Westminster Abbey, backed by



the Highgate hills. These objects, when combined with the appropriate accompaniments which for ages adorned the Palace, and enriched the foreground, now changed from the picturesque character of a park to the dull monotony of arable and pasture land, presented a landscape of no ordinary variety and richness. Our ancestors generally preferred the gratification of their habitual love of field sports, and the exercise of their various feudal rights, to the display of the architectural beauty they so well knew how to create; and the possession of the surrounding demesne was charm sufficient, without the prospect of them from their windows. They courted, and it is presumed enjoyed, the splendor whose seclusion was safety, and therefore closely allied with all their ideas of comfort; nor were these impressions, inseparable from the existing state of society, at all materially mitigated even in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Eltham Palace, however, enjoyed to the full the double advantage of itself beholding the scenery around, and with being itself beheld with the admiration it deserved as a noble and commanding object. Its detached offices, and according to the old plan there were several on the sides of the road leading to the bridge, and elsewhere, interfered not with the prospect,

and were as judiciously situated as could be expected from the refined skill of the present day.

The neighbourhood of the Palace is still, in part, richly clothed with trees of noble growth, but that portion of the ancient park which belongs to the residence of Lord Rivers, comprehends little more than forty acres ; and another adjoining, of seventy acres, denuded within the last twenty years, together comprise scarcely a twelfth part of the original limits.

The distance from the village does not exceed a quarter of a mile, in a south direction. The road has not lost all traces of its ancient boundary : a group of stately trees shelters the approach to the bridge, and verdure of every kind has been encouraged within the walls, where it flourishes unchecked on ruined masses of stone and brick. To crown all, the hall of the Palace, with its lofty gable roof, and double bay windows, though nearly encompassed by houses of comparatively recent erection, when viewed from the road towards the west, is seen alone, embosomed in wood, and betraying none of those injuries which a nearer approach exposes to view.

The Palace admitted of only one gateway for common ingress, but there was another on the opposite, or south side, leading into the garden.

In these particulars, the plan of Eltham exactly corresponded with that of Bodiham Castle, whose principal gateway faces the north. In both examples, that part of the moat extending before the entrance, is considerably broader than the rest. At Eltham, it is increased from sixty feet, the mean breadth, to one hundred and fifteen. On its inner boundary stood the gateway, approached by a bridge consisting of a strong abutment and four arches; this handsome structure is well preserved, and it remains the only entrance to the enclosure, which is not accessible in any other direction, and cannot be made so under a cost which will long secure the place from an innovation of this kind. It was built when the Palace was enlarged and improved by King Edward the Fourth, and was probably the first of stone over the moat. Draw-bridges were more ancient and more secure appendages to houses as well as castles of defence, but they gave place to structures of the present kind, when elegance in domestic architecture might safely be combined with strength, and other principles of construction be admitted than those of mere fortification. The bridge, or rather causeway, at Bodiham, was defended by a strong gateway with side towers, about midway in its length, and it is evident that towards the south there was a draw-bridge. Of

these securities the former is dismantled, and the latter wholly removed, but the moat is full of water, and contributes to the beauty, though no longer to the security, of the roofless and dilapidated towers. This was a strongly fortified castle, but Eltham and Hurstmonceaux were castellated houses. The latter, a pile of great magnificence, is now surrounded by a dry moat like the former, which it also resembles in having a bridge of arches before its south gateway, and once, a draw-bridge on the north side. The bridge at Eltham is remarkable for the elegance of its design, and the strength and soundness of its construction; the arches are of various dimensions and groined, and the piers sustained by angular buttresses.

An inconsiderable fragment of the gateway, joined to the bridge on its eastern side, remains. In Buck's Views, published more than a century ago, the entire building is represented. Its gradual demolition seems to have been effected as the ruins of the Palace yielded to convenience, and the ground was required for farming occupations. Till the year 1813 two venerable but imperfect stacks of brick chimneys, one on each side of the way, were preserved. Since that date, one of these relics, with the wall on which it stood, has been entirely removed, and the other so much defaced that it will scarcely

be noticed by those who remember how much these fragments of well-wrought brickwork formerly contributed to the picturesque beauty of the view from the bank of the moat.

These might have been portions of the work of King Henry the Seventh, who, however, cannot be supposed to have entirely rebuilt the gatehouse; for we are informed that there was a palace here long before the time of Anthony Beke, Bishop of Durham, and that he only repaired, rebuilt, and beautified it, when it came into his hands, and "*the stone work over the outward gateway looks of that age.*"\* Another account says, "*the stone work of the outer gate being castle like, is a remnant of the work of the age in which that prelate lived.*"† Of its antiquity, or the predominant material of its walls, I can say nothing, but its form and extent may be imagined from the ancient plan of part of the Palace, published by Hasted. In Buck's print there is only one archway in front; but the plan shows two, that is, a large arch, and a postern, with rooms on the sides, and two staircase towers. The buildings of the Palace on the flanks of the gateway, comprehending the whole of the north front, are described as decayed lodgings.

\* Harris.

† Philipott.

The area of the Palace is an irregular square, whose longest side faces the west. It was surrounded by buildings towards the north and west, and partly inclosed on the other two sides; and the middle space occupied by four quadrangles, two on the west, and as many of very inferior dimensions, on the east side.

The line of buildings thus extending across the area, were the most considerable in point of magnitude and grandeur in the whole assemblage; and consisted of the great banqueting hall, the chapel, and several other noble and stately apartments, of which, excepting the first, nothing remains above ground. These were connected with the western range of buildings. To the other end of the hall were joined the passages leading by two doorways to the kitchen and culinary offices, which were arranged along the eastern boundary; and over the passages, various apartments comprehended within walls of the same height and breadth as those of the hall.

The apartments of ancient mansions were arranged and proportioned on a plan which has long ceased to be approved, or at least followed, though it is one which claims many advantages over the now common fashion of shaping and adorning all the rooms alike, or on a scale of equal beauty. It is now often difficult to dis-

tinguish the state from the inferior apartments ; indeed we have not yet attained any positive system in their disposition and embellishment. Formerly the chief beauty and expence were lavished on a few rooms : the great entrance and dining-hall, the withdrawing-room, and the chapel. These, but more particularly the first named apartment, were conspicuous for their proportions and ornaments.

The hall adorned the exterior by its porch, its lofty windows, its projecting bay, and its turreted loover ; but to the interior it proved far more important and useful ; and the individual interest of all these features was slightly regarded, while the eye surveyed the extent of the apartment ; the just proportion between its length, breadth, and height ; its arched and highly adorned roof ; its sumptuous screen ; and when, above all, it was viewed in connexion with the frank and generous feelings of social intercourse or dignified protection on the one hand, and devoted attachment on the other, which gave it the prominent station it occupied in the group.

It is not easy to account for a seemingly unnecessary irregularity in the original formation of the ground marked out for the site of this Palace, and the arrangement of the plan thereon. The central pile of buildings, or to describe

it as it now appears, the hall stands nearly in a due east and west direction, but the bridge and gateway, and consequently the entire north side, point considerably towards the east.

The gateway entered the court in one of its angles, and was not the less convenient or less conspicuous on that account. Its spacious arch faced the door of the hall, and an embattled parapet of greater altitude, and perhaps enrichment, distinguished this feature from others of inferior note. This inattention to uniformity was more common in very ancient mansions than in those of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; for examples: no dissonance of this kind appears in the arrangement of the plan of Thornbury, Compton Winyate, or Cowdray, in which last the variety of architecture, and consequently of form and ornament, has produced an assemblage of towers, turrets, bay windows, and battlements, of unusual interest and beauty.

But the gateway leading into the principal courts of Berkeley Castle and Haddon Hall occupy angles, the latter exhibiting one of the most singular instances of contrivance to be found in ancient architecture. The hall court, standing considerably above the level of the one from which it is entered, has a flight of steps in front of the gateway, to give which its most convenient position, and obviate the various diffi-



culties with which the architect had to contend, the wall of the superincumbent tower has been made to rest on arches and corbels with remarkable ingenuity.

If the entrance to the principal quadrangle at Eltham possessed not in this respect the advantage of some mansions, it was certainly superior to many others in the relative position of the external gateway and the porch of the hall, the slant direction of which was maintained in building the bridge; indeed this line, which points from the north-east to the south-west, is nearly conformable to that of the block, or raised platform, on which the Palace stood.

Though it is no longer possible to point out the situation of the gateway that connected the two great courts, or even to determine whether there ever was any direct communication between them; it is, I think, indisputable, that the passage over the foss towards the south, was not for common purposes, but only a means of access to the terrace, gardens, and park, from the south court, whose boundary was determined partly by the Palace buildings, and partly by an embattled wall.

In the engraved plan before referred to, copied from a drawing made in 1509, the south side is shown quite open to the park, and the other three sides entirely inclosed by buildings.

The general ground figure bears no resemblance to the present walled area. There is no indication of the existence of buildings in the middle of the precinct; and a pathway is rudely marked across the ground from the North gateway to that on the south side. But there are other omissions and insertions of a very perplexing kind: the bridge and moat are not shown, but in place of the latter, several distinct groups of buildings; namely, near the south-east corner, the scalding houses, store houses for the works, and coal houses; near the north-east corner, the great bake-house; and on the other side of the road, the chandry, or general store house.

All these adjuncts, excepting the last, stand within the breadth of the moat. But let us do justice to the artist of the sixteenth century, and thank him for what he has done, not blame him for what doubtless he was not required to do. His drawing we must believe, answered the purpose for which it was made, and is now become a very valuable memorial. I am indebted to it for the appropriation of several detached buildings without the walls of the Palace, and for establishing the places of others within the moat, all which would otherwise have been unknown, or become matters of conjecture. Perhaps this drawing accompanied a

survey of the Palace made by order of Henry the Eighth, who seems never to have felt any of the partiality so strongly evinced by his predecessors for Eltham, and who early contemplated its desertion for a neighbouring spot of great beauty. However this may be, the drawing represents the offices, the whole of which here, as in most ancient mansions, were distributed on the ground floor.

Another curious document, which materially aids this part of our inquiry, is the survey of this Palace made immediately after the death of King Charles the First. On the 16th of the following July an ordinance was passed to consign the property at Eltham to trustees, for the purpose of having it surveyed and sold; when the manor with its appurtenances, the manor-house, great park, and parish lawn, the great manor lodge, the middle or little park, &c. were purchased by different persons, who retained possession of them till the Restoration in 1660, when the whole again became the property of the crown.

By this survey it appears that the capital mansion-house built with brick, stone, and timber, was called Eltham house; and consisted of one fair chapel, one great hall, thirty-six rooms and offices below stairs, with two large cellars; and above stairs, in lodgings called the King's

side, seventeen lodging rooms; and on the Queen's side, twelve lodging rooms; and on the Prince's side, nine lodging rooms; in all thirty-eight, with various other small and necessary rooms and closets: and thirty-five bays of building round the court yard, which contained one acre of ground; and the said bays of building contained about seventy-eight rooms, used as offices. The whole being much out of repair, was sold, and the materials valued at £2753.

The term "bays," used to describe the outer range of building, seems to denote that it was composed of large masses of different heights; or in other words, that the apartments were distributed in a range of edifices resembling towers, some more lofty and some more spacious than others, and retiring from the front, or advancing before its line, as might be required. Whether or not this was the intended meaning of the word, I think it certain that in general appearance, Eltham Palace was as destitute of straightness and uniformity, as other ancient quadrangular houses.

The mean elevation of the structures on the boundary, was doubtless far out-topped by the lofty proportions of the central buildings, whose elegant architecture met the eye in occasional openings; and in the centre of the west side,

the edifices attached to the hall extended to the extreme verge of the precinct.

In the design of this Palace was observed the rule of limiting the elevation to two stories; and there are not many examples of a third range of apartments below the roof. The lower floor sometimes comprised the hall, which, in this case admitted of no particular distinction; for example: the halls of the ancient mansions at Congresbury in Somersetshire, and Aishbury in Berkshire. At Methley, the seat of the Earl of Mexborough, in addition to the lofty hall, appears a story with handsome bow windows; but it is to be observed, that this singular arrangement has occasioned an unusual height of building, and that no part of the hall, excepting the perch and arches within, are prior to the age of Elizabeth.

In buildings of great or small extent, this judicious rule was strictly followed, and Lord Burlington has proved in another style of architecture, that grandeur of design is not incompatible with an elevation comprising only two ranges of apartments.

The distance between the hall and the wall washed by the moat on the west side, is sixty feet; and it will be observed that though throughout the western boundary the very ancient stone basement remains, yet, from the level of the

inclosed ground, the superstructures of both extremes have been rebuilt of brick; but not so the middle space, consisting of about one third the whole extent: hence there is reason to suppose that, with the great hall, the building joined to its western extremity, of stone, of the same age and the same architecture, retained without abatement, till the period of its destruction, its beauty and fair proportions.

Two bold, but imperfect buttresses distinguish the part of the wall here described, and the care with which these supports were constructed is evident in the excellence of the workmanship and the soundness of the material. The ground rooms of this building were occupied for the pastry, the spicery, and my Lord Chancellor's buttery.

King Henry the Seventh, who resided much at Eltham, and, as appears by a record in the Office of Arms, most commonly dined in the great hall, rebuilt the front of the Palace next the moat, that is, the west, or principal front, which extended full three hundred and eighty feet; and havoc rested from its unworthy toils before it had exterminated all traces of the Tudor building therein referred to.

Eltham Palace exhibited the same partial, though not inconsiderable, re-edification which very few mansions of remote antiquity escaped. The spirit of improvement often, and not un-

frequently the love of variety, influenced these changes, and the taste with which they were sometimes made, may, without presumption, be questioned; especially where we observe the mutilation of an elegant feature for the accommodation of one destitute of merit as a specimen of architecture, and of propriety on the score of convenience.

How far Eltham Palace warranted these observations, must remain doubtful; but referring to the alterations which in former times were made in ancient buildings, I may remark, that the hall more commonly retained its original character than any other part of the mansion. This might have been on account of its dimensions, which were always ample, and where no improvement in convenience could be made, none was desired, if attainable, in the architecture. Certainly no improvement in this respect would have followed an alteration of the hall at Eltham. Henry the Seventh could not have produced in its stead a building with excellencies of so high an order as were commanded by Edward the Fourth. If talent had not greatly diminished, the style of architecture on which it was exercised, claimed merit rather for the profusion and delicacy of its ornaments, than for the boldness and beauty of its proportions.

In the order and space of the other rooms, the

later ages are entitled to the palm of superiority. Henry the Seventh improved Eltham Palace; and other mansions, such as Cowdray, Penshurst, Methley, Clevedon,\* and Mayfield, were

\* The hall of Clevedon Court, the seat of Sir Abraham Elton, Bart. near Bristol, was built in the reign of Edward the Second. Its external design is remarkable on account of the breadth and boldness of the porch and the bay-window, between which appears the only window (excepting the bay) which admits light on the south side. The interior has been modernized, excepting the space under the gallery, which, besides the arches of entrance, retains the original triple doorways leading to the kitchen and its offices. The ancient chimneys on the outside are interesting specimens of their age; indeed, the whole fabric exhibits noble simplicity and correctness of design, and it is unquestionably one of the most valuable relics of early domestic architecture in England. The kitchen was rebuilt in the reign of Elizabeth, and possesses considerable merit; its prevailing ornaments are imitated from an older style—an example which was neglected by the architect who was afterwards employed on the other side of the hall. But, as if to prove that taste in architecture could sink still lower, the west front has, within half a century, been rebuilt in the Chinese Gothic fashion.

I may here add, that the county of Somerset abounds with the remains of ancient court and manor houses. The example at Kingston Seymour, built in the reign of Edward the Fourth, whose favourite badge appears in the front, resembles the design of Great Chalfield, and possesses scarcely less interest than that mansion. The imperfect house at Tickenham may be cited as a model of the style of architecture which prevailed early in the fifteenth century; and modern refinement might well be satisfied with the proportions, decorations, and



altered still later, all, however, retaining the original great banquetting hall.

Walls of brick were often, in the period of which we are now speaking, substituted for those of stone. The same material forms the walls of Eltham hall under a case of stone; but brick alone was commonly used, and ingrafted on masonry, as in this example. Its peculiar ornaments, in addition to carved work, were distinguished by black bricks, arranged in various patterns over every blank surface; and specimens of these decorations remain on the west and south walls of Eltham Palace. \*

windows of the withdrawing-room. The south and east windows are of grand dimensions; the two facing the west are narrower, all of the same pattern, and one retains vestiges of the painted glass with which the whole have been filled. The paneled ceiling of wood is very beautifully ornamented. The dimensions of this room are  $30\frac{1}{2}$  feet by  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

\* Some very interesting ornaments of this kind appeared on the north and east boundary walls of the ancient mansion-house at Bermondsey. The patterns consisted of lozenges, with crosses on their upper points; cross keys and sword (the arms of the see of Winchester); the sacred cross, curiously constructed; the cross of St. Andrew; intersected triangles, in allusion to the Holy Trinity; the globe and cross; the merchant's mark; the badge of the Borough of Southwark; and a representation of the west front of a Church, consisting of a centre, with a Norman arch under a gable, between two towers, whose pointed roofs terminated in

King Henry the Seventh's building, which the record calls "handsome," doubtless partook of the character which distinguished the best designs of that and the succeeding reign, so celebrated for their generous encouragement of architecture. The same spirit which guided Edward the Fourth in the building of his Palace, seems to have descended without diminution to his royal successor.

Angular or circular bay-windows, variously clustered, are the predominant features. The specimen adjoining Queen Elizabeth's gallery in Windsor Castle, is of unrivalled magnificence, and the forms there observable have been adopted on the sides of Henry the Seventh's Chapel. Wolsey has preserved the same rich and elegant character in the great west gateway of his College in Oxford; and the Duke of Buckingham also combined the forms alluded to, in two superb bay-windows, each comprehending two stories, in the splendid south front of his castle at Thornbury.\*

crosses. This rude figure was 7 feet 8 inches long; and the author confesses himself fanciful enough to conjecture that it preserved an imperfect idea of the sacred edifice of Norman architecture which once occupied this very site.

\* Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, the noble founder of Thornbury, designated his intended residence, which he had planned on the noblest scale, and began to

That windows of the kind here described, and of which I have enumerated several of the most interesting.

adorned with all the correct embellishments which the taste of the age afforded, a castle; and this circumstance, strengthened as it was by the character of the outward walls, which were flanked by towers, surmounted by battlements, and furnished with loop-holes, has been said, but erroneously, to have been one of the pretexts for his destruction by Wolsey. The undeserved fate of the founder, and the confiscations which followed, decided that of his house. The unfinished pile was left to decay: the apartments in the southern court, which had been completed and inhabited, fell into ruins; and many of the half-raised walls were pulled down to their foundations.

The walls of this castle inclose three courts of different dimensions. The outer or western court is the most spacious; it contains all that was built of the principal gateway. Only one tower, standing at the angle where the principal west and south fronts unite, remains entire; it is a masterpiece of design, and has a machicolated parapet. This was an invention of castellated architecture, and its use was fully answered in the instances at Conway, Carisbrooke and Bodiam Castles; but in after times, and in buildings in which defence was less consulted than ornament, this bold kind of parapet supported on triple corbels, was frequently adopted, so that at length it became an established decoration, though from its peculiar character, it could not always be admitted on the walls of domestic structures; and was excluded from ecclesiastical architecture, unless, indeed, the gateway of a Monastery, which certainly approximated to a fortification, may be included under that denomination, and an exception be made for Church towers occasionally thus applied. The tower of Thornbury Castle is much indebted to its parapet for its bold and stately character; the surmounting bat-

greatest specimens now remaining, once distinguished the western façade of Eltham Palace, is

elements are no longer perfect in this feature, and in every other they exhibit the appearance of age and neglect. All the lofty walls are, or once were, designed to be crowned with this handsome ornament, which is another appropriation of a defensive feature of castles, to ecclesiastical and domestic architecture.

The second court is less extensive, but more conspicuous for the magnificence of its buildings than the first, notwithstanding that the great gateway forms the centre of a design whose variety and grandeur would have been almost incomparable elsewhere. Besides this lofty pile towards the west, the second court presents on the right the state apartments, whose chief external beauties are not seen from this position; and on the left, and once also in front, the great hall and lower ranges of buildings, containing the requisite offices of the establishment.

The third and smallest, but most attractive court, lies towards the south of the last-named; this had apartments on all sides, or, at least, such was the intention; but the only perfect portion of this court, and, indeed, of the whole pile, is the north side, which included all the most sumptuous apartments, and which engrosses almost the whole of the visitor's attention and admiration. There can be no doubt but that the west front would have been more lofty, more bold and diversified in its design, and more magnificent than the south side, which, however, was the most beautiful composition of architecture in this castellated mansion; and it perhaps would be difficult for taste in her happiest moment to form a more admirable combination. Such is the extent and arrangement, and such are the component features of the castle which Buckingham planned, and would have perfected but for his untimely death. Wesley might have

more than probable. The basement of a bay-window, consisting of an oblong square,  $12\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  in bulk, with a wall of a triangular shape in front, is a very interesting relic among these scanty ruins. But this is not a solitary feature; it stands between four other solid masses, the basements of towers, bay-windows, or chimney shafts, and assumes the appearance of uniformity, though wanting in exactness of dimensions. This range, measuring ninety feet, joins the south angle; on which aspect, the extreme tower appears in the same proportions as towards the west; and at the distance of twenty feet there is another tower, of nearly equal size, between which and the bridge, the wall is levelled to the foundation.

I have before observed, that the old plan denotes no buildings on the south side, but at the extreme angle next the west it defines a cluster prominent enough to stretch nearly across the moat. These are described as the lodgings of the Lord Chancellor.

There are no fragments of walls to determine watched the progress of this great work with a jealous eye; he himself was a magnificent patron of the arts, and of architecture in particular; but his noblest foundation was surpassed by Thornbury in every thing but extent. In this respect there is no excess in this interesting mass of ruins. Its walls cover a vast tract of ground, but its longest front reaches not two thirds of the extent of the west front of Christ Church in Oxford.

the extent of the south front from the west angle, but the vaults which still remain underground, if not capacious drains, were used for cellars, and have had buildings over them. But these subterranean rooms are not now so easy of access as they were formerly; one has been partly, and several entirely closed up. Two on the west side still remain open, and one towards the south, originally sixty feet long, is now a convenient receptacle for garden implements.

All these vaults, excepting the last, are about three feet wide, and six feet high to the crown of the arch. The principal one facing the west, extends fifty feet underground, but the one adjoining, and that towards the south, merit description. The former extends 25 feet from the entrance, and consists of three members, altogether resembling the Roman I. The middle space measures 10 f. 4 in. by 4 feet. The outer division contains the staircase, which formerly communicated with the apartments above; and the inner, a deeply recessed arch, between which and the vault is an aperture in the roof 24 inches by 20, framed with stone, and doubtless once concealed by a trap door. The door of the latter, or south vault, appears between the towers before noticed, and its course is singularly irregular, varying in width from four to six feet, four feet three inches, and four feet

nine inches. In the left or west wall is an arched recess, five feet wide, and four deep, and further on, a small recess or niche. But a square aperture in the roof near the outer doorway is the object of primary interest. It is neatly formed, and large enough to admit the passage of an individual, and seems to justify the vulgar tales of adventures by means of secret passages, which attach to this, and many other celebrated old houses.

It will not, I presume, be rejected as idle or improbable, that formerly there might have been occasions which would render a secret retreat useful. The water approached nearly to the level of the passage floor, and a few moments would suffice to convey the retreating party to the opposite bank. Whatever might have been their original destination, it is evident that these vaults and drains were constructed for the longest duration. The ancient builders, to the other excellencies of their science, added that of strength, and these inconsiderable specimens of their work possess this merit in the highest degree. The cement which united the stones is not less durable than the material itself. These underground buildings have survived the noble mansion for whose convenience they were designed, full two centuries, without exhibiting the least symptom of decay, and will probably last unimpaired through many more ages.

The remainder of the west front, extending to the north angle, is less perfect than the portion before described, but it exhibits the workmanship of two distinct ages, and presents the same mixture of brick and stone, and a greater number of towers; with a more considerable irregularity in their position and dimensions: they altogether measure full one hundred and fifty feet. The shape of one of these appendages is semi-octagonal; all the others are square. In the front of the bow appears the entrance to the long drain already mentioned, and, ten feet beyond, another in a parallel direction.

A considerable space in the corner of the offices above these walls, latterly, if not anciently, (speaking from 1509, the date of the plan,) was appropriated to cattle, the slaughter-house, &c. and, beyond these, coal-houses, and many other useful rooms.

A mantle of ivy now canopies the summits of these broken walls, and, in the absence of the ornaments of architecture, is an embellishment which no one would wish to see displaced.

Many of the bulky appendages to which, for want of being able to distinguish their original appropriation, I have applied the general name of towers, were probably the shafts of chimneys, as skilfully incorporated with the general design as those in the front of Great Lees, and on the



west side of Hengrave; and little less conspicuous than the ponderous masses on the south side of Cheynes Hall.

The union of stone, brick, and wood, on the exterior of ancient mansions, was for a time, a common style of building, and, on the score of durability, the present condition of many very ancient structures chiefly of wood, admits on our part no regret at the use of this material in preference to others which, in appearance at least, are superior, and as easily attainable.

The chapel of Bramhall-hall is one of the most highly finished examples I can name. Its exterior, though partly altered, still exhibits much delicate and beautiful tracery, and shows the skill of the workmen, who seldom united carvings of this kind to walls of plain and massy frame-work. The church at East Grinstead is an example of unknown antiquity; and one scarcely less curious, though certainly less ancient, is the chapel attached to Moreton-hall, consisting of a body and chancel, rudely constructed and unembellished. These may be taken as the coarsest examples of a style which attained considerable beauty when the eastern part of Eltham Palace, Ford's Hospital in Coventry, and Ockwell manor-house, were built. At Eltham, a substantial and doubtless elegant building of stone was taken down to admit the

gables were once adorned with lofty pinnacles, whose beauty may be imagined from the handsome fragments which remain united with uncommon elegance to the frame of the open-wrought tracery, which, in various patterns, enriches the gables. Yet with its pristine ornaments perfect, such as tapering pinnacles, windows of tracery, and ribbed walls, it must after all have formed a mean substitute for the stone edifice with an embattled parapet, which it replaced, though it must be allowed that the ingenuity of our ancestors enabled them to give grace and elegance to whatever material they thought proper to employ in the useful or ornamental purposes of architecture.

The occasional application of brick and timber did not considerably affect the use of masonry, which at all periods has retained the predominance, as the most substantial and handsome. It was indeed to be expected, that three materials, alike the produce of the soil, and admitted for architectural purposes by the climate of England, should flourish together, though the absence of one of these advantages was evidently no obstruction to the views of those able architects who, in the watery wastes of Lincolnshire, where no stone is to be met with, erected some of the handsomest parish churches in England. It remains to be proved how far the

introduction by the moderns of a fourth material—iron, which, though well known, and well wrought in former times, served no higher purpose than the formation of subordinate internal ornaments, will effectually supersede the use of masonry in walls, and timber in the roofs, of their buildings, to which objects the restless activity of our contemporaries has of late been strenuously devoted.

The beauty of Henry the Seventh's building towards the west, might occasion no regret at the change which that sovereign made in the architecture of his Palace at Eltham; but with wood and plaster it was not possible to excel the general character here given, that of the commonest domestic style, though it appeared with the enrichments of older architecture. This fragment of the building, dividing the area from east to west, stands between the hall and the eastern boundary, twelve yards apart from the former, and nearly the same distance from the latter, which space is now covered with sheds and outhouses, on the foundations of rooms connected with the kitchens, which occupied a large space on the eastern boundary; the remainder of the side having had lodging rooms, which it appears went to decay in the next reign.

The other space remains open, being the only

means of communication between the two divisions of the court. The depth of this dislocated member is not equal to that of the hall; indeed the south side of the present house is modern. The west wall is ancient; its direction from the present angle is continued thirty-five feet southward, where it enclosed a room whose opposite side was joined to the buildings which occupied the site of the road. The east and south walls of this room retain eight feet of their elevation, but the west side is levelled to the foundation. It is of brick, thicker than any other excepting the boundary, and is increased to six feet by a basement, which exhibits a handsome moulding. In the east wall, within the room, or rather shrubbery, is a stone chimney arch, six feet wide; nearly over it a small window; and in the wall of the house two ancient arches, one a doorway, immediately opposite one of those in the hall; both formerly opened into the passage to the kitchen. Higher up in the wall of the house, is a broad and lofty arch, which is without ornament.

The conjecture that there were four courts, two in the south, and two in the north division of the inclosed area, arose from the belief that the kitchen and other offices connected with it, and lying towards the east of the hall, were screened from the north and south quadrangles,

on the sides of which were ranged the state apartments. The line of these boundaries I pretend not to determine, and it is to be regretted that this, and other interesting particulars relating to the economy of Eltham Palace, are irretrievably lost.

The Hall was the master feature of the Palace. With a suite of rooms at either extremity, it rose in the centre of the surrounding buildings, as superior in the grandeur of its architecture, as in the magnificence of its proportions, and the amplitude of its dimensions. This fair edifice has survived the shocks which, at different periods, laid the Palace low. Desolation has reached its very walls, and the hand of wanton mischief has dared to injure where it could not destroy; but still the hall of Eltham Palace has not, with the exception of the loover, been entirely deprived of its smallest constituent feature.

Its north and south sides were both open to quadrangles. Their architecture corresponded precisely, excepting that the south parapet was plain, while that on the other side, facing the principal gate of entrance, was embattled, and the cornice enriched with sculptured corbels.\*

\* Not a portion of either parapet now remains to prove this assertion, though both were nearly perfect twenty-five

In this majestic structure, the architect scrupulously avoided the frequent use of carvings, which, it is evident, would have destroyed the elegant simplicity of his design, and besides its intrinsic excellence, this specimen of the Palace will abundantly prove how well the ancients could apply the style to domestic purposes; how far removed from gloom were their habitations, where defensive precautions could be dispensed with, and how skilfully they prosecuted whatever they undertook in architecture.

The size and situation of this building have hitherto secured it protection, which, however, it is not likely much longer to retain. It was found that the banqueting-hall would serve the purposes of a barn; this, and not any consideration of its venerable antiquity, the dignity of those who caused its erection, the noble uses to which it had been devoted, the excellence of its design, or the costliness of its materials, preserved it from the ruin which fell on all around.

Now that the building needs repair; after serving its degraded purpose for more than a century, and standing by its original strength, for no substantial repairs have in modern times been bestowed upon it, or any care taken to or thirty years ago. They are represented as above described in ancient drawings in the King's Library, in Buck's print, and in another in the sixth volume of the *Archæologia*.

protect its walls from violence, it is condemned as old and useless, and must no longer cumber the ground.

This fate hangs over the last grand relic of Eltham Palace ; a fate which might be averted by the application of one of the many thousands which are annually voted for the monstrous inventions of modern architects, called palaces. Millions are exhausted to rear monuments in proof of the bad taste of the age, and the abundance it has yet to learn before it attains a knowledge of the grand and sublime in architecture, at the same time that a few hundreds judiciously applied, would secure for the admiration of after-times, a building that has been admired and neglected in our own, and which posterity may have more taste or greater ability to consult as a model, than ourselves.

The proportions of Eltham hall, and the harmony of its design, attest the care and skill which were exerted in its production. Other halls may surpass it in extent, but this is perfect in every useful and elegant feature belonging to a banqueting-room. It was splendidly lighted, and perhaps required painted glass to subdue the glare admitted by two and twenty windows. There are no windows over the high pace, or the screen, and there were none in the majority of examples, though, from

unavoidable circumstances, Westminster and Guildhall receive their light in these directions. The custom of so placing halls, that, like chapels, their extremities should point towards the east and west, though followed at Eltham, was in one of these instances abandoned. The former, as a single object, is the most stupendous relic of ancient domestic architecture in England; and, like the subject of our present remarks, it now remains, comparatively speaking, a solitary monument of the magnificence of which it was once but a constituent part. Its lateral windows are small, and closed up by buildings on the outside. There are similar obstructions in the second example; but neither of these grand rooms are adorned with bays, the appropriate features of halls, and many others are without them, while a considerable number resemble Eltham in having two of these windows.

The windows are arranged in couples, in five spaces on both sides, occupying the length of the building from the east wall to the angle of the bays; every window is divided by a mullion without a transom, and every space by a buttress, which terminates below the cornice, and at the foot of the windows has twice the projection of the upper half.

Altogether, however, these supports are slender, and partake of the same light and elegant



proportion which characterises the whole building. The walls alone are adequate to the weight which presses on them, but their strength is increased by the buttresses—features which are almost inseparable from the ancient style of architecture, and were frequently used for ornament when their strength was superfluous. The buttresses at Eltham are both useful and ornamental; and, as if to determine for which purpose they were most required, several of those facing the south, are mangled or destroyed.

This building furnishes a strong proof of the scientific powers of former architects; it shows how accurately they calculated between the support and the weight supported, and though we look with some surprise at the thinness of the walls which have for so many centuries upheld the vast roof of timber, yet we must be satisfied that it was an undertaking of no temerity, since the walls would still have stood as erect as when first built, if the external covering of the roof had not been wholly neglected, or only imperfectly repaired; and so far from exhibiting a fissure through decay, it is difficult in some parts to trace the joints in the masonry; nor is the carved work less perfect.

I shall detract nothing from this high praise, which is so justly due to the architect of this

building, by observing that the divisions formed by the buttresses, have not been marked out with the scrupulous accuracy which no modern professor of the science would fail to practise. The difference at most does not exceed three inches, and would defy the closest observer to detect; but, if the ancients disregarded these minute particulars, which, it must be confessed, were of no consequence to the general effect, they were studious to insure the firmness of their buildings, and the beauty of their designs.

The bay windows nearly complete the length of the hall, which on the inside exceeds by a few inches one hundred and one feet, and thirty-six and a half wide. Their shape is an oblong square, and their proportion nearly that of a double cube, having in front two windows, and one towards the east. The opposite end of both bays were joined to the walls of the house; and, though concealed from view externally, presented internally a uniform appearance. The manner in which these appendages are united to the main walls is singular, and on the outside, where alone the contrivance is observable, certainly inelegant. The side windows of the bays are, in fact, recessed in the wall of the hall, with which the basement below; and the parapet above, meet in a right angle. On this account nearly half of one compartment

of the window is concealed from view, but a moment's inspection of the interior will abate the surprise this irregularity at first occasions.

It appears that the architect's aim was to maintain strict regularity of design, and to produce as much lightness as was consistent with stability. These points are now perfectly gained. An arch of exquisite delicacy extends over the space between the bays and the hall, in the room of ~~one~~ proportioned to the substance of the main walls, and which would have resembled that of the bay at Cowdray, where strength and not lightness is the character.

~~I have heard it hinted that the northern bay was added after the hall was built, but this opinion can never be seriously maintained. The masonry of this window is not constructed differently from that of the other to warrant such a supposition, which could only have arisen from the contrivance I have already explained. The recesses occasioned by the space between these windows and the end of the hall, belonged to the adjoining rooms, and those on the upper floor were perfectly distinct from that great apartment, but below they were made the means of communication between the hall and the state rooms.~~

The chief door of the hall faces the north, and was nearly opposite the outer gateway by

the bridge. There is another door on the south side; both opened into a vestibule formed by the screen. A rigid economy in the application of ornaments was observed on the exterior of the building; both parapets were not embattled, and both doorways on the same account were not ornamented. That on the south side, is a plain arch unworthy of the edifice to which it belongs. The other adorns the building, and exhibits the workmanship of a hand no less skilful with the chisel than that with the pencil which traced its design.

It consists of a square frame, protected by a cornice, and an arch deeply recessed within its mouldings, resting on pillars. An elegant pattern of tracery encircling the *rose en soleil*, enriches the spandrels. This remains the principal entrance, and the shattered screen still secures the hall from sudden intrusion. Though these doorways have never been sheltered by porches, yet the necessity of an appendage to answer the same purpose seems to have been felt; this substitute was doubtless a cove, or canopy of wood, supported on two stone corbels, which remain just above the southern doorway.\*

\* Canopies of this kind are sometimes attached to ancient churches as on the west side of the south transept of Kidlington church, Oxfordshire; and we occasionally meet with others of stone; but, among the former number, that

The interior is magnificent. The taste and talent of ages are concentrated in its design, and it is scarcely possible to imagine proportions more just and noble, a plan more perfect, ornaments more appropriate and beautiful, in a word a whole more harmonious than this regal banqueting-room.\*

on the south side of Holy Trinity church in Exeter, was of unrivalled elegance and beauty—these merits, however, were insufficient to secure its preservation.

\* Having described several banqueting rooms remarkable for their grandeur, beauty, or design, I shall here notice two other interesting examples. The plan of composing a hall of three aisles, that is a broad middle between two narrow side spaces, resembling the body of a Church, is of remote origin, and is exemplified in a noble room erected in the last half of the thirteenth century at Winchester. Westminster was originally the same; and though several halls were built on this ancient plan in the fifteenth century, yet the spacious and undivided room, of which class Eltham may be adduced for the grandeur and excellence of its proportions, seems generally to have been preferred. The design of the former appears to have admitted of every convenient arrangement, and those who are acquainted with the building at Winchester to which I have just referred, will recognize it as the same described by Dr. Milner as having been a chapel.

The hall of the hospital for pilgrims founded by Henry VII. on the site of the Savoy Palace, was cruciform. Its North member remained nearly perfect till 1816, when the whole was demolished. The internal length each way was 226 feet, and the width 30 feet. The walls were three feet ten inches thick, and the buttresses projected four feet nine

It requires great strength of imagination to picture this glorious room in its pristine state: the long and lofty walls clothed with rich tapestry, and here and there decorated with the trophies of war, or those of the chase; the canopy of state, pendant over the high pace at the upper end, and all its other enrichments; for on this honoured station are now seen the various instruments of agriculture; and between the two bay windows, whose delicate mullions were enclosed by painted glass, rich in historical groups, and heraldic devices, and whose ample breadth shed a profusion of light around the seat of royalty, the sun no longer shines but through the crevices of brick or wood-work, which supplies

inches at the base. The side windows throughout, consisted of double compartments with a transom, and the parapet was originally ornamented with battlements, and with pinnacles springing from the buttresses. The North window was fifteen feet wide, and very handsome, having on each side within the room, niches, whose recesses were formed to receive statues the size of life, beneath canopies which rose nearly to the roof. The roof was of timber, supported on stone corbels, and in a print published by the Society of Antiquaries, the loover is placed over the point of intersection. Below the windows were numerous recessed arches, probably for seats.

Previously to the demolition of this hall, the modern buildings by which it had been encumbered, were removed, and its venerable walls appeared nearly in the condition to which they were reduced by the fire in 1776.

the place of glass. The slender stone tracery, wrought with all the nicety of art, and so carefully preserved, is now clustered with cobwebs, where the stone has been permitted to remain. The screen, once sumptuously carved and painted, and furnished with all the instruments known to the age, is now a broken and almost shapeless frame. The floor, once well covered with tables of massy carved oakwork, and prepared to administer to thousands\* the hospitality of the times, is now an uneven bottom, piled with machines of husbandry, and rubbish;—these are a few of the changes which three centuries and a half have produced in the hall of Eltham Palace.

The roof, though now the most perfect, and always the most splendid part of the interior, has suffered its proportion of injury : many of its most delicate enrichments have been gradually removed ; but as its chief ornaments are the constituent members, and not the minute carved work, these remain entire, and compose a design which merits, and continues to receive, as much praise as any existing work of antiquity. The principal beams of the roof repose on the summit of the walls, which are crowned with a

\* King Edward IV. A.D. 1482, kept a splendid Christmas in Eltham Palace, with great feastings, two thousand people being fed at his expence every day.

broad and boldly projecting cornice of numerous mouldings. Every one of the frames thus formed, amounting to seven, includes a wide spreading arch, within and intersected with which are the handsome arches composing the essential features of the design, and the side segments, resting on brackets which terminate on stone corbels most beautifully formed. These segments, joined to horizontal beams attached to the side cornice, themselves assume the form, and answer the purpose, of brackets, since they sustain the main arches, whose elegance is much increased by the pendant corbels by which they are upheld.

The exquisitely beautiful form and decoration of these appendages surpass description; it may, however, be said, that they are octagonal, composed of tracery, surmounted by a capital, and supported by a corbel, both of the same shape, the one broad for a canopy, and the other long and tapering to a point.\*

\* It is less wonderful that the more delicate enrichments of these pendants should be destroyed, than that a single specimen should have remained in its place till the year 1817, to prove the original beauty of the whole. This valuable relic was attached to the wall in the south-west corner. Before the next summer it fell, or was removed; and I deem myself fortunate in possessing a drawing of it (engraved in p. 32) and believe that no other copy of it was preserved. A small fragment of the original wood is in the possession of my friend George Gwilt, Esq.



The remaining space between the arches and the apex is occupied by open wrought tracery.

The assemblage of features thus disposed on an elegant and well-contrived principle within a triangular frame, constitutes the magnificent roof of this room. The precise form of the arches, clustered mouldings, and traceried panels, which please by their variety and the richness of their combination, and proclaim the ability of those by whom they were designed and wrought, admit not of description, and their effect is greatly heightened by their perspective, and the mysterious gloom which fills the recesses, and allows the imagination to exercise its powers.

The loover occupied the third division from the upper end. The hexagonal frame-work, from which it rose high above the external roof, rich in pinnacles and tracery, remains, and marks the situation of the hearth below.

It was destroyed prior to the date of any drawing or engraving of the palace now known; but, as the hearth was not substituted by a recessed fire-place in the side wall, it is probable that the old method of warming the room was adhered to till its desecration, and that afterwards, the loover was removed as useless.

Such at least was the pretext for destroying the light and lofty turrets which once embel-

lished the halls of Christ Church, Magdalene, and New Colleges in Oxford; Hampton Court, and many similar edifices. The halls of Westminster, Trinity College Cambridge, Wadham and Lincoln Colleges in Oxford, still retain their loovers, and all these, excepting the last, are glazed, in conformity with which innovation, the appropriate name of this feature has been changed to suit its present use, that of a lantern.

Without attempting to particularize the minute decorations, it may be generally observed of the mouldings throughout this edifice, that those in the roof are beautifully formed and richly clustered, and that among those of the windows and doorways, some are very peculiar either in form or association.

The liberty of the architect is still more apparent in the forms of the arches, which are proportioned to suit their situations without reference to rule. Indeed the shape of the arch can never solely be relied on as characteristic of its age. The front windows of the bays more nearly resemble the shape which prevailed in the architecture of Edward the Fourth's reign than any of the others; and closely correspond with the principal doorways in Magdalene College, and also with the smaller arches on the sides of Bishop Waynflete's sepulchral Chapel in Winches-

ter Cathedral. The obtuse form predominates at Eltham; it is excluded from the door-ways, and I could name several buildings of Edward the Fourth's reign, wherein the arches vie with the elegant proportions adopted in the fourteenth century.

The blank space below the windows, which is considerable, was once appropriated to the display of tapestry or frescoe painting; and on these, and perhaps other accounts, became a distinctive character in the design of these rooms.

Exceptions to this rule are not uncommon in halls of an inferior class; for examples: Bagilly in Cheshire, and Smethells in Lancashire: two of the oldest and most curious buildings of the kind in England; and the hall on the south side of Great Malvern church, rendered remarkable by two tiers of windows on the sides.

The stone work in the spaces over and between the windows in the interior of Eltham Hall, was always uncovered, and on that account is constructed with great care, being composed of large squares, while the broad space below is of brick, cased on the outside towards the south, with masonry of an inferior quality to that above, which resembles the interior, and with which the principal or north side also corresponds. The substantial layer of cement on which the tapestry was fastened, is not yet wholly removed, and

much of a similar composition remains on the walls of Westminster Hall.

The absence of wooden panels on the walls may be noticed as an instance of superior taste in the internal decoration of Eltham Hall; the oldest and most admired examples are without it, and it was not added to the walls of domestic or ecclesiastical buildings in which excess of ornament does not prevail.

The Bay Windows are of unrivalled grandeur and beauty. In each a rich and elegant pattern of tracery, highly decorated with sculptured knots, the whole wrought in stone of the most delicate workmanship, expands in a uniform pattern over the roof, and reposes its clustered springers on the capitals of slender shafts, which, in the sides and angles of the space, are combined with the mouldings of the windows, and rest on a plinth at their foot. The delightful harmony which the reduction of the solid members of these windows into clustered mouldings and pillars, the latter not more substantial than the mouldings themselves, has produced, in a space necessarily small, and to which delicacy of proportion and detail peculiarly belong, is truly admirable. The great arches leading to the interior are of an obtuse form, but those of the windows excel in beauty of form even the side windows of the Hall. Their graceful length

admits of a division by a transom, consisting of arches with an embattled cornice, whose upright shafts united to the pillars of the roof, rest their bases on the sill. They have also an additional enrichment in the tracery, which is most beautifully carved, and by an excess in the curves of which it is composed, presents a singular outline.

The character here alluded to, though very common, is difficult to describe : it occurs in all the windows of Crosby hall ; in the west front of Christchurch, Oxford ; in Gloucester cathedral ; and in so many other magnificent buildings, that it must not be confounded with the capricious deviations, if such there were, from fixed ornaments.

On the inner sides of the bays appear the elegant doorways by one of which the hall was entered from the withdrawing-room. The bays of the halls at Kingston Seymour, Tickenham, Saint Donat's, Wingfield manor-house, and Athelhampston,\* also contain the entrance

\* Athelhampston deserves to be no less distinguished among the ancient houses in Dorsetshire than Great Chalfield among those in Wiltshire. The latter is the most ancient, and its architecture the most elegant, but the former possesses a greater variety of interest. Its windows are richly stored with painted glass, and the gateway leading to the inner court is remarkably curious and handsome. All

to the chief apartments : but the arrangement was unusual, and it may be remarked that no other internal doorways appear in the hall of Eltham Palace.

These bay windows are in good proportion to the hall, and contribute to its grandeur and beauty. Others there are, so formed that they entirely lose their external character, with much

the ornaments, however, are coarsely carved, and very few of them designed in a pure taste. But at Great Chalfield the excellencies of design and sculpture are united. One of the oriel windows, with a top resembling an ancient regal crown, is more beautiful than any other of the circular shape I have seen. The principal front towards the north is entire; the hand of innovation has not presumed to violate any of its essential features; on the contrary, plastered windows, crumbling walls, crooked turrets, a half-filled moat, and a dilapidated bridge, whose single arch bends across the muddy foss, strongly urge the belief, that this venerable place is resigned to time to effect without a helper the gradual decay of the materials.

Having long been applied to the purposes of a farm-house, for which its extent and the size of its rooms renders it very commodious, this mansion is no longer known in the neighbourhood by any other name, and it is honoured in no higher degree by its owner. The neatness of an English farm-house certainly does not distinguish Great Chalfield; neglect and decay are visible in every part of the edifice and its accompaniments, and comfort and convenience are disregarded, provided the rooms shelter the grain, and the roads which convey it hither, enable loaded waggons to pursue their sluggish course. The history of the Tropenells,

of their internal elegance, from the want of height, occasioned by a room over them, as at Great Chalfield and Kingston Seymour. The design of these mansions closely correspond, and present the bay with its superincumbent room attached to one wing of the front, and to the other the porch.

This arrangement, as it regards the interior of the bay, is observable at Clevedon, Samlesbury, and Melcomb Bingham, where, however, by giving these spacious windows an insulated position, the architect has maintained their external elevation, and by superior embellishments, rendered them very attractive objects. The rooms thus added to the bays often contained the window, by means of which, the host and his family could command a view of the

who formerly resided here, is now reduced to a few brief particulars, which I subjoin, and for which I am indebted to Sir Richard Colt Hoare, Bart.

Sir Osbert Tropenell.—

Sir J. Tropenell. Sir Walter, his brother, of Sapworth.—

Sir Walter—Catherine, daughter of Sir W. Percy of Great Chalfield.

Thomas Tropenell, ob. 1490; had livery by Henry VI. of Great Chalfield, by the marriage of whose daughter and heir with Mr. John Eyre, the estate passed to the Eyres.

The Tropenells had very considerable property, besides Chalfield, in Wiltshire.

banquet in the hall. This is the case at Samlesbury and Little Mitton. The gallery at the other end of the hall was sometimes used for the same purpose. In the wall over the high pace at Kingston Seymour is a small aperture, a substitute for a window, sheltered by a canopy, and directed into the apartment above the withdrawing-room. The number of halls with and without windows, for the purpose just described, is pretty nearly equal. Among the latter, I enumerate Eltham, though it has been described by an author from whom I dissent with diffidence, as having one immediately under the roof at the upper end. In the plate which accompanies the remarks in the sixth volume of the *Archæologia*, Mr. King has delineated an arch with mouldings, an extent to which the authors of a recent publication of considerable merit have not ventured, even after a close examination of the wall, and a removal of some of the brick work for the purpose of ascertaining the precise form and dimensions of the arch.\* The height of the supposed window from the floor is uncommon; but a stronger argument against it is, its appearance in the roof of the buildings attached to the hall,

\* Plans, elevations, &c. of the Hall of Eltham Palace, by Dunnage and Laver, London, 1828.



above the ceilings of the two tiers of state apartments; and it should be remarked that, if an aperture had originally been formed in the wall, and afterwards filled up, the evidence of its existence would remain as conspicuous on what is now the external wall, as on the other side.

The minstrels' gallery in Haddon hall, was resorted to by the family, when they chose to have no direct intercourse with the assembled visitors in the space below. This arrangement was common; perhaps, without exception, in the mansions built during the reigns of Elizabeth and King James; and the magnificent character of the halls of that age may be witnessed at Burton Agnes, Longleat, and Hatfield. The screen in the first, is a design of extraordinary richness, and that in the last, of grandeur which it is impossible not to admire. Its summit reaches nearly to the ceiling, and conceals the appearance of a gallery, from which, however, a view of the room is obtained through a handsome arcade.

The decorations of the high pace were swept away, with many other internal embellishments, on the misappropriation of the hall at Eltham. A fixed canopy of wood, extending quite across the room, might once have adorned this, as it still does the halls at Samlesbury, Little Mitton,

Bolton, and Adlington. In the last named example, the panels exhibit the arms and alliances of the Leghs; and the knots on the frame work, the following inscription in single letters beautifully carved :

Thomas Legh & Caterina Savage nuptiis A°. D°. 1666.  
 1666. 1666. 1666. 1666. 1666. 1666.

This hall presents a discordant variety of architecture; of carved and painted ornaments; of interesting and inelegant embellishments. It may be remarked as having a doorway on the north side of the high pace, corresponding to one in the bay at Eltham, and leading to some of the principal apartments of the mansion. The convenience of this arrangement is evident; but not so that at Tickenham, where the north upper doorway of the hall leads into the open court yard.\*

The prominent situation of the Screen, which is advanced ten feet six inches into the hall at the lower end, was favourable to the display of handsome decoration, and the ample space was in this instance, adorned so as to correspond with the rest of the building. The last frag-

\* On each side of the hall, between the windows, is a stone bracket of elegant workmanship, for the purpose, it should seem, of supporting the military trophies which were among the most admired decorations of these stately apartments.

ments of its carved work were destroyed about ten years ago, but it appears that the whole of the perforated tracery was gone when a drawing of this screen was published by the Society of Antiquaries in 1782.\*

The main pillars and beams are all that now remain. Of the five spaces into which the front of the screen was separated, the two broadest contained doorways, the capitals and springers of whose arches till lately remained; and if the rude drawing before noticed can be relied on, the spandrils were superbly carved. The middle and side divisions were paneled from top to bottom, the former with five compartments, the latter with four in each, the whole separated into two rows by a most elegant frieze; the upper row only was perforated. That this kind of ornament occupied the spaces on the sides of the doorways, and not the double tier of broad and open arches, as shown in the drawing in the *Archæologia*, is still evident. The ornamented frieze is altogether omitted, and there is no indication of a gallery.

It requires no very profound knowledge of architecture, to trace in the present mangled skeleton of the screen, all the component members of the perfect design, though it must be confessed that within the last ten years it has

\* *Archæologia*, vol. vi. p. 368.

experienced considerable damage. There has been much elegance in the pillars of the doorways, which are circular, with slender shafts attached to them; and the upper cornice, which is broad and very handsome, and probably surmounted by a highly wrought border.

The screen now supports a rude frame-work of wood, which may be mistaken for the remains of a gallery, a feature which frequently belonged to rooms of this class, but one which was so often omitted, that it cannot fairly be numbered among the constituents of the design; it at least never formed a part of the internal decoration of this Palatial hall; and the passage behind the screen at Eltham, was never covered by a ceiling. The strongest confirmation of this opinion I can add is, that there is no staircase or doorway by which a gallery could have been entered, either from the common level, or from the floor of the adjoining apartments.

There can exist no doubt that the screen, designed to shut from the view of the hall the different doorways which were necessarily arranged behind it, corresponded with those which still remain unaltered in the hall at Great Chalfield, that in the monastic hall at Milton, in Dorsetshire, and the one at Rufford. The last differs from every other with which I am acquainted, by standing detached from the side

walls: the intermediate spaces form the entrances to the hall, the screen itself not being perforated. It is entirely covered with ornaments, and is further remarkable on account of its form, which is somewhat pyramidical, the turrets ascending nearly to the roof.

Even in this example, where we observe so singular a deviation from a settled form and arrangement, there are two entrances to the hall, one at each extremity of the screen, which, like the middle compartment in the elegant screen at Eltham, faces and conceals the doorways leading to the kitchen; but at Bagilly, which is altogether a most remarkable structure, the side spaces form the piers or frame of a lofty and handsome arch in the centre, in which it does not appear that there ever was a screen. There is no less grandeur than novelty in this design; but that of which Eltham affords so perfect a model, was the commonest at all periods, and seems to have better answered its object than any other.

There remain to be noticed only the two stone doorcases in the wall opposite the screen, and once the entrances to the kitchen, and its appropriate offices. These arches are plain, and the remains of bolts and hinges prove the care with which they have been secured.

In the absence of a positive date, I could

scarcely desire stronger evidence of the age of this building than I shall mention, after having observed that no conjecture on this interesting question has hitherto been advanced.\*

Indeed that any memorials of the kind should have been overlooked or disregarded, is not surprising, considering that the subject never has been treated like one of uncommon interest, and that the hall of Eltham Palace excited no unusual attention, till it was threatened with destruction. This menace, though often repeated, will, it is hoped, not be fulfilled. The building is worthy of whatever sum it would cost to restore its stability and magnificence, and interesting enough to be cleared of its encumbrances, and kept for exhibition to the curious, and the lovers of our ancient English architecture.

King Edward the Fourth is the first sovereign on record who is mentioned as having built any part of Eltham Palace. He, we are informed, "to his great cost, repaired his house at Eltham."† And though no part of the building is here particularly named, yet the architecture of the hall bears the stamp of his age: namely the last half of the fifteenth century; and

\* Since this was written the badge of Edward the Fourth has been noticed in the *Literary Gazette*, No. 600, p. 460.

† *Perambulation*, 1596, p. 522.

further, one of the well-known badges of this monarch is a conspicuous ornament in the spandrels of the north entrance. I have before described it as a *rose en soleil*; it is carved with the utmost delicacy, is shown in the Title-page, and is precisely similar to one drawn on a contemporary manuscript in the records of the British Museum.\*

\* This badge, surmounted by a crown, is beautifully carved among the ornaments of the exterior and interior of the tower gateway of Magdalene college, Oxford. It also appears on the western porch of the chapel, in the pulpit in St. John's court, and on the stone door-case at the foot; and till lately on the wooden door at the head of the staircase leading to the library. A representation of this badge is a conspicuous ornament on the breast of a monumental figure of an ecclesiastic regarded with veneration at Queen's college, as that of their founder, Robert Eggesfield. The brass plate was presented by Doctor Stukeley to Francis Drake of York. In style and expression it exactly corresponds with several elegant monumental brasses in Magdalene College chapel. It was probably removed from the ancient chapel of Queen's College, and preserved from the wreck of similar memorials, but wants a legend to prove that it was erected in the last half of the fifteenth century (which is its true date), in memory of the founder. The vest is highly ornamented, and bordered with the *rose en soleil*.

The screen which formerly supported the rood loft in Keynsham Church near Bristol, exhibits in the panels of the cove a repetition of this badge, which also appears among the decorations on the north side of the Deanery in Wells.— For the history of this badge, see Wiffement's *Regal Heraldry*, pp. 45, 52.

This is not the only heraldic device now remaining on the building. The sculptures on the northern cornice and the south bay, are the heads of men and beasts, hideously deformed. Those in the ceilings of the two great windows, each having had forty-five, are mostly composed of roses and foliage. Many of these ornaments are entirely obliterated, but several very interesting devices remain perfect. One in the south bay exhibits the Falcon and Fetterlock, a badge of King Edward IV. sustained by four angels with expanded wings; another is composed of a ribbon intricately intersected; and three in the north bay, consist of the rose en soleil.

The reign of Edward the Fourth produced many noble monuments of architecture, both ecclesiastical and domestic. Somersetshire contains some very beautiful specimens of both kinds, and other counties are rich in the style of this period. The king himself seems entitled to a place among the encouragers of architecture. The most noble monument of his taste and bounty, is the chapel of St. George at Windsor. He also carried on the building of King's College Chapel, which had been founded, and partly erected by his munificent but unfortunate predecessor, Henry the Sixth; and the Palace at Eltham was no inconsiderable instance of King Edward's attachment to the science.



This example alone is sufficiently eminent to prove that the talents of the age were employed; and that those talents were powerful and well regulated, we are not at liberty to doubt, after naming these instances of their successful exertion.

The precise situation of the Chapel noticed in the survey as a "fair" building, is unknown, but it doubtless formed part of the extensive pile to which the hall belonged. It was probably comprehended in that part of the Palace built by King Edward the Fourth, whose fourth daughter Bridget was born here in the 20th year of his reign, and the next day baptized in the chapel by the Bishop of Chichester.

The chapel was situated on the upper or principal floor, and, with the surrounding apartments had, below stairs, thirty-six rooms and offices, and two large cellars. One common characteristic of domestic architecture is the height of the windows from the ground, that is, their appearance on the upper floor, where all the principal apartments were almost invariably placed. Whether or not this arrangement was originally designed, and afterwards persisted in, for security, it answered that purpose; and while in some instances it added strength to an already fortified mansion, in others it formed, excepting the

most, the only protection from sudden intrusion.

The west front of Gosfield Hall is a fine example of this kind of design : and Compton Winyate, which is also purely domestic, as having two stories of large windows on the outside. Hengrave partakes of both these characters, but Eltham Palace was decidedly built on the former plan.

In the year 1810 the ground on the sides of the Hall within the enclosure, presented nothing but shrubs and heaps of loose masonry. The vault in the South-west corner lay open and unoccupied, and the foundation of a wall parallel to the west side, about thirty feet from it, and sixty-feet long, exposed to view. But within a very few years, part of the ground has been levelled ; and adjoining the boundary, both on the west and south sides, a variety of hovels built ; a row of pig-sties attached to the south side of the hall, which is further obstructed by a plantation. The other side of the hall is also disfigured by mean appendages : the bay alone appears in its full proportions.

The Moat has been converted into a garden, on the south, east, and north sides, as far as the bridge, beyond which, and facing the west, it remains covered with verdure for the food of cattle.

The Gardens and pleasure grounds attached to the Palace, were enclosed by a high brick wall, of which a considerable portion remains towards the east and north, and is seen near the road by which the ruins are approached. A venerable Gateway will not escape the antiquary's observation: it is more lofty than the wall, and constructed wholly of brick; the arch is broad, handsomely shaped, and well constructed, surmounted by a high centre, between a low side parapet, and retaining fragments of a strong cement with which the arch has been covered to appear like stone.

This gateway and wall are shown in the plan to which I have made such frequent reference, and one end of the bakehouse, joined to the latter in an acute angle, now forms the wall of an out-house: the other end is joined to the corner of the Palace by a short wall. The object of the plan could surely have been no other than to distinguish the number, situation, and condition of the whole range of offices, without any attention to exact relative position or proportion, either as regarded themselves, or the main buildings of the Palace.

Nearly at the further end of the wall is a small Cottage entitled to notice from its age, which is equal to that of the gateway, early in the sixteenth century. The outer door, and a passage

of rudely constructed timber, are all the remaining evidences of antiquity.

It is perhaps carrying conjecture too far to suppose this building to have been an appendage to the store-house, which the artist of the old plan has, with so little regard to fidelity, joined to the east side of the Palace. However, allowing for space, the situation of this house is not in other respects remote from accuracy.

The road from the village to the Palace has not entirely lost its ancient character or beauty. Part of the avenue which once lined the whole way, still shelters the approach to the bridge; and on the left is seen the modern mansion-house within a small park, whose magnificent oaks and elms form the chief beauty of the scenery now bordering on the architectural remains.

On the right, beyond the line of trees, is a row of respectable dwellings, among which are discoverable some remains of antiquity, particularly in the corner house, composed of brick and wood, with a high roof, and a remarkable stack of chimneys; this house is noticed in the old plan as the chandry or general storehouse, and seems to have stood alone.

There were three Parks attached to Eltham Palace. The Great Park, the Little or Middle Park, and Horne Park (the last, enclosed by

Edward the Fourth); altogether containing about 1314 acres, to which must be added the demesne lands of nearly 400 acres.

The quantity and value of the timber on the ground at the time of the survey, may be calculated from the following statement: the ornamental trees, or such as were 'old and decayed' were numbered at upwards of 4000, and those for the use of the navy at 3700; of these 2620 belonged to Horne or Lee Park, situated in Eltham and Lee, containing 336 acres 1 rood.

The deer were destroyed, and the parks dismantled by the soldiers and common people, immediately after their seizure by the Parliament.

As nothing certain is known respecting the age of the buildings whose remnants still exist, it is not surprising that the period when the first house was erected on the ground at present occupied, is altogether a matter of conjecture. It stood, as has been supposed, on the spot formerly distinguished by the mansion in which King Henry the Third, in the fifty-fifth year of his reign, kept his Christmas, "accompanied with his queene and nobilitie, and this (belike) was the first warming of the house (as I may call it) after that Bishop Beke had finished his worke. For I do not hereby gather that hitherto the King had any property in it, forasmuch as the princes in those daies used commonly both to

sojourn for their pleasures, and to pass their set solemnities in abbaies and in bishops houses."\*

Anthony Beke, Bishop of Durham, succeeding John De Vesci, who obtained a grant of this property from Edward the First, bestowed great cost on the buildings, and dying here March 3d, 1310, granted the reversion of Eltham House, with its appurtenances, to the Crown.

Lambard, who quotes Leland, says, that Bishop Beke "was either the very author, or the first beautifier of this house."

King Edward the Second resided here; and in the ninth year of his reign, A. D. 1315, his queen was delivered of a son, called, from the place of his birth, John of Eltham. Edward the Third, in the fourth year of his reign, held a Parliament in this Palace; and thirty-four years afterwards entertained John King of France (who had been his prisoner) with great splendour. The same King again held a Parliament here in 1375, and Lionel his third son kept his Christmas here in 1347. Richard the Second resided much at Eltham, and took great delight in the pleasantness of the place. Henry the Fourth frequently resided here, and kept his last Christmas in this Palace. Henry the Fifth

\* Perambulation.

also resided at Eltham; and Henry the Sixth made this Palace his principal residence.

Edward the Fourth repaired the buildings with much cost, and in 1482 kept a splendid Christmas here with great feasting.

Henry the Seventh built a handsome front to this Palace towards the moat, and usually resided here, dining in the great hall with all his officers. Henry the Eighth neglected Eltham Palace, though he sometimes resided in it, and in 1515 and 1527 kept his Whitsuntide and Christmas here; but "this house, by reason of the nearness to Greenwich, hath not been so greatly esteemed, the rather also for that the pleasures of the emparked groundes here, may be in manner as well enjoyed, the Court lying at Greenwich, as if it were at this house itself."

"Humfrey, the Duke of Gloucester and Protector of the Realme, was the first that laid the foundations of the fair building in the towne, and tower in the parke at Greenwich, and called it his Manor of Pleasance. After him Edward the Fourth bestowed some cost to enlarge the work. Henry the Seventh followed, and beautified the house with the addition of the brick front towards the water side. But Henry the Eighth, as he exceeded all his progenitors in setting up of sumptuous housing, so he spared no

cost in garnishing Greenwich, till he had made it a pleasant, perfect, and princely palace.\*

The bricks which were used in the construction of this edifice, whose extent and noble character are very well represented in a drawing of the age of Queen Mary,† were supplied from the kilns at Eltham,‡ or, in other words, the materials which had been provided for the reparation or re-edification of the more ancient Palace, were, on its desertion for Greenwich, removed thither for the improvement of that building.

Time is daily making havoc amongst the curious remains of domestic architecture, and his injuries are no where more conspicuous than at Eltham. In those instances where they are said to be preserved, it is generally without care or expense, and they must therefore gradually yield to the influence of their insidious enemy.

But, after all, Innovation is the most dread foe to Antiquity. Subtle and plausible, its proselytes are numerous and powerful; its operations are active and decisive. Time produces

\* Perambulation.

† This drawing of "Placentia and the town of Greenwich," with others of Hampton Court, Richmond Palace, Oatlands, and a view of London, were brought from Flanders, and are now in the possession of Mrs. Sutherland.

‡ Harris.



decay; reparation follows in a useful building; in a merely ornamental one, already a ruin, the injury is slowly, and almost imperceptibly, however certainly, inflicted: but Innovation sweeps away all at once; the weak and the substantial are involved in one common ruin; and what to-day might have thrown great light on some obscure but interesting feature of history or manners, to-morrow may be levelled with the dust, depriving us perhaps of the sole surviving evidence on the subject of our researches.

I am not aware of having omitted any interesting particular either in the history of Eltham Palace, or in the architecture of its remains, and am sensible how inadequate are descriptions of this kind to their subjects. The pencil may, but the pen cannot, do justice to the architectural detail of Eltham Hall, and it must be allowed that the ability to produce so perfect a work of art could not have been gained without great exertions of the mental powers; and that to have pierced so deeply into the intricacies of science, in ages comparatively rude, and certainly destitute of many advantages which the moderns possess for the purpose, is a merit but ill requited with the appellations of *Goth*, and *Barbarian*.

If our early architects retained not their high estate, but sunk too soon into puerility and ex-

travagance, they shared but the common lot of humanity; and, at any rate, it ill becomes us to magnify and deride their defects till, with the immense accessions of knowledge of which we are accustomed to boast, we make a much nearer approach, I will not say to superiority, or even equality, but to the humble imitation of their zeal, their liberality, and their taste, as displayed in their surviving monuments.

#### POSTSCRIPT.

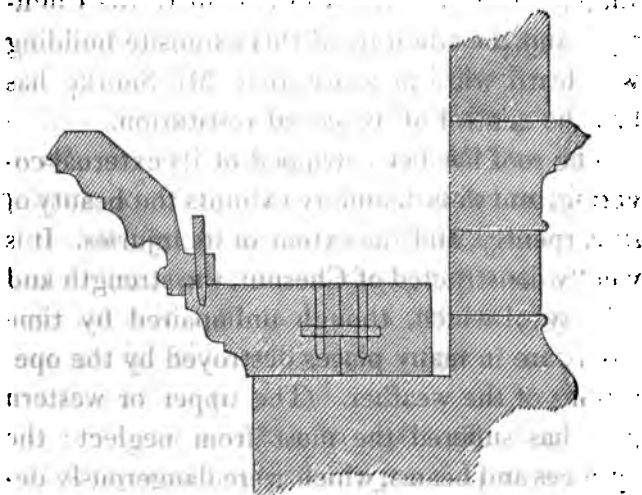
15 September 1828.

**ELTHAM HALL** is now under repair. The preservation of this noble monument of ancient English Architecture is an honour to the Country; and the admirers of this exquisite building will learn with pleasure, that Mr Smirke has had the control of its partial restitution.

The roof has been stripped of its external covering, and thus distinctly exhibits the beauty of its carpentry, and the extent of its injuries. It is wholly constructed of Chesnut, the strength and solidity of which, though unimpaired by time alone, are in many places destroyed by the operations of the weather. The upper or western part has suffered the most from neglect: the cornices and beams, which were dangerously de-

mayed, have been repaired, and perhaps restored to their original stability.

The following observations on the construction of the roof merit publication. The principal wall-plate, measuring 11 inches by 20, is rabbeted into the cornice, of which it forms a part, and which is further secured by wedges 12 inches by 8, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  thick. These together form the bold and handsome cluster of mouldings which crowns the walls on both sides. The two plates were wedged and pinned together, and composed a mass of astonishing firmness. These beams have been partly cut away, and the space supplied with brick-work which supports the new rafter-plate, which is fixed 13 inches above the level of the ancient one.



*Section of the wall-plates, cornice, and parapet.*

The restoration and security of the westernmost principal, which had sunk considerably below its ancient level, have been effected by powerful exertions. The early decay of some of the principal timbers is attested by the substantial repairs which have been made in the same places where decay has again rendered similar precautions necessary. Formerly the deficiencies were supplied with Chesnut, which is now substituted by Oak, strongly bolted and strapped with Iron. Whatever might have occasioned the injury which was arrested several centuries ago, it is certain that the mischief, which has been in operation with silent celerity upwards of four-score years to the present time, was not accelerated by the dry-rot, which has not been discovered in any part of the building, excepting a small spot in the principal wall-plate over the South bay-window.

The main beams of the roof are full 17 inches square, and 28 feet long, perfectly straight and sound throughout, and are the produce of trees of the most stately growth. A forest must have yielded its choicest timber for the supply of this building; and it is evident that the material has been wrought with incredible labour and admirable skill. As it has been stated that the joints and mouldings of the roof were secured by wooden pins only, it may not be superfluous

to remark that the structure is held together by the assistance of nails.

The present repairs are limited to the roof, the parapet by which it is protected, and the buttresses by which it is upheld. The Bay-windows are not to be redeemed from the ruin into which they are fast sinking; and the Hall is again to be used as a Barn.

"The Hall, where oft in feudal pride  
Old England's Peers to council came;  
When Cressy's field spread far and wide  
Edward of Windsor's warlike fame;  
Whose rafter'd roof and portals long  
Rung while unnumber'd harps awoke;  
Now echoes but the thresher's song,  
Or the sad flail's incessant stroke."\*

## ANCIENT HALLS, AND OTHER BUILDINGS,

### INCIDENTALLY NOTICED IN THIS WORK.

Abbotsbury Barn 31.	Blickling 13.
Addington 88.	Blithfield 18.
Askham 20.	Bodiham Castle 39.
Athelhampton 83.	Bolton 24, 88.
Baggily 23, 24, 81, 91.	Bramhall 61, 62.
Barsham, East 7.	Bramshill 19.
Beaconsfield Rectory 27.	Burleigh 19.
Bermondsey 52.	Barton Agnes 19.
Berkeley Castle 44.	Chalfield, Great 52, 84, 85, 90.

\* Eltham, a poem by the Rev. S. J. Allen.

- Cheynes 18, 61.  
 Clevedon Court 52, 85.  
 Compton Winyate 9, 10, 29, 44, 62, 96.  
 Costessey 18.  
 Cotehele House 6.  
 Cowdray 44, 52, 73.  
 Crosby Hall 83.  
 Earl's Coln 21.  
 Eastbury 10.  
 East Grinstead Church 61.  
 Evercreech 9, 10.  
 Exeter, Trinity Church 75.  
 Flaundon, Priest's house 16.  
 Gosfield 96.  
 Glastonbury Barn 31.  
 Greenwich Palace 101, 102.  
 Guildhall London 70.  
 Gwydir 63.  
 Haddon Hall 9, 44, 87.  
 Hadlow Place 21, 27.  
 Halstead 21.  
 Hampton Court 12, 80.  
 Hardwicke 19.  
 Hatfield 87.  
 Hengrave 7, 9, 10, 18, 19, 61, 96.  
 Hurstmonceaux 40.  
 Kidlington Church 74.  
 Kingston Seymour 9, 52, 85, 86.  
 Laurence Waltham 25.  
 Lees Priory 29, 60.  
 Little Mitton 24, 86, 87.  
 Longleat 19, 87.  
 Malvern, Great 81.  
 Marl Place 27.  
 Maxstoke 29.  
 Mayfield 10, 52.  
 Melbury 7.  
 Melcomb Bingham 85.  
 Mere, Fisherman's hut 16.  
 Methley 49, 52.  
 Milton Abbey 90.  
 Montacute 19.  
 Moreton 61.  
 Naworth 20.  
 Norton St. Philip 62.  
 Ockwell 26.  
 Oxford, Christ Church 54, 57, 80.  
 ——— Magdalene College 15, 80, 93.  
 ——— New College 80.  
 ——— Cross Inn 16.  
 Placentia, Greenwich 101.  
 Penshurst 12, 52.  
 Pilton Barn 31.  
 Raby Castle 11, 12.  
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